CERTAINE 3 Sermons preached of late at Ciceter, in the countie of *Glocester, vpon a portion of the first* Chapter of the Epistle of Iames: wherein *the two seueral states, of the riche and poore man* are compared and examined, the differences in quality, and duety betwixt them shewed, both directed to such Christian parts and offices, as the sufficiencie of the one may, and ought to performe, and the wants of the other do necessarily require.

Penned at the earnest requests of diuers *well affected Inhabitantes of the place: and now published as well for the vse of others, as for the further profit of that particular congregation.*

By *Philip Iones*, Preacher of the word of God in the same Towne.

Allowed by authoritie.

Imprinted at London by T. D. for *Thomas Butter* 1588.

¶ To the right Reuerend Father in God, *Iohn*, nowe Bishoppe of *Glocester*, *and Commendatarie of Bristow*, *Philip Iones* wisheth the increase of all good graces fit for the discharge, and answering of so great a calling in this life and in the next, the fruition of those ioyes, which are euerlasting in *Christ Iesus*.

PAVL that chosen vessell vnto God, being appointed a principall instrument or minister, for, the bearing of his name, before the Gentiles, and kings, & the children of Israel, hatting passed through the handes of many keepers, Centurions, Souldiers, high priests, and gouernours, at last appeared in *Cesarea* before *Agrippa* the king, who beeing desirous to heare him and his cause, & hauing for that purpose giuen him lawful libertie to speake for him selfe, he thought and pronounced *Act.9.15.*

Act.26.2.3. him selfe happie, in that hee was called and permitted to answere before him of all the thinges whereof hee was accused of the Iewes, chiefly, because hee had knowledge of all customes and questions which were then amongst them. In like manner I at this time (right Reuerend) cannot but take my selfe if not in the same degree happie, yet in some proportiō fortunate, in meeting with this present opportunitie for the vse of free speech to, and before you, not in the customes, and questions of the Iewes, but in the thinges that concerne a better state and gouernment seene, and exercised sufficiently. For I esteeme it no small adiument, or furtherance of an honest cause, to haue such a Iudge of the controuersie as both in quality is willing to heare, & in iudgement able to determine according to reason & equity: although at this time it is not my intention, to sollicite you as a Iudge in a cōmon quarrell, but to purchase you as a Patrone to a scholler's work: litle I confes in quantity, & far from any exact or exquisite thing, whether you respect the phrase & stile, or the maner of hādling thorowout the whole tractate: by reason wherof, I coulde fully haue

satisfi-

ſatisfied my ſelf, either in the cloſe reſeruing therof amōg my papers, or otherwiſe in the priuate cōmunicating of the ſame with my friends: but being preſſed with the importunities of many good brethren, who being preſent at the preaching, haue made report of the fruit & benefit they therby reaped, & therefore would take no anſwere, but the graunt of a publike vſe of the ſame, for their further comfort, and the profit of others, I coulde not in conſcience or curteſie, denie ſo reaſonable a requeſt proceeding from ſuch Chriſtian & cōmendable minds. And hauing at the laſt, for their contentment in this one part (though leauing them diſcontented, for the reſt,) yeelded to the multitude of reaſons, wherewith they vrged me, I haue taken this courſe, and made this choiſe in the publiſhing to vſe your Reuerend name, and patronage for the ſame. VVherunto beſides ſundrie effectuall motiues inducing me, (which for ſome reſpects I here ſuppreſſe) one is of good conſequēce, meete in this place to bee introduced, and ſpecified: and that is, an earneſt deſire wherewith I haue for a ſeaſon trauailed, to haue you thorowly acquaynted with

the state, and trueth of certaine actions of mine, which by reason of the practises
Ezra.4.1. of suche aduersaries, as *Iuda* and *Beniamin* sometimes had, in a matter not muche different in nature though somewhat in circumstance, are so farre from beeing entertayned with lawfull fauour, as that they are prosecuted with extreeme displeasure vnder you, yea and by you, (as of late in your heate and passions openly appeared) to the great incouragement of the common enemie, and no little discomfort of manie that professe sincerely and discreetely. I craue pardon if anie syllable sounding to offence, bee in my wordes, to your selfe or others towards whom my meaning perhappes may seeme to reache: for, I carrie no purpose to rippe vp, particular matters or to make the name of any man odious by complaint, but onely a care, and conscience to maintayne a good cause, to deliuer the trueth of thinges, and to preserue from wracke a Christian account, and reputation, which
Prou.15.30 according to *Salomon* maketh fatte the bones. VVhich thinges I fynde my selfe animated in this sorte (or otherwise if occasion

occasion bee offered) to vndertake vppon this surmise, that to your selfe, (I meane your selfe, simplie considered, and not by others inchaunted) there cannot be a thing of more prompt acceptance then an honest meane vsed to remoue such vnkinde and causelesse opinions, as vpon priuie suggestion haue beene (too easily) conceiued, and to scatter such mistes of accusations, as by the inuentions of malignant spirits, haue beene plotted, & preferred against my temperate course. I speak nothing but that which is common in the knowledge of the world, as not don in a corner: the dealings of some men (I will not say monsters) being such so many so impudent, so malitious, & so furious against vs, as that a way to preuent their mischiefes, and a time to breath our selues are hardly recouered, from their ordinarie vexations. Whereunto when I adde in my priuate consideration, the immoderate and fierce proceedings of your self, your courts, and officers, by interrupting the vse of my ministery, and stretching the armes of authoritie to the vttermost (I may not say beyond law, reason, and christian conscience) to the increase of my disquietinges, and the

Acts 26.26.

full

full measure of my molestations, I see small cause in common sense, of taking any heart or spirite to fulfill my course, and to growe on in that spirituall worke, whereof a beginning of great hope is already made, and a foundation layd amongst them, who at this present doe inioy the benefite of my attendance: when as those who after a sort naturally (by the communitie of office) shold lend their shoulders & hāds, to beare of the blowes, and iniuries of hypocrites, & the broode of vipers, doe contrary to the course of nature, and duetie, ioyne (as it is feared) with them, to strengthen their practises, and to giue more life to their deuises, for the vtter spoyle & ouerthrowe of many good & singuler possibilities. which thing hath made me of this opinion, that either you haue egregiously forgotten (my reuerēce to your place & person premised) or that you do wittingly neglect the aduise, or rather charge of the most reuerend, & honorable, the Archbishoppe of this prouince, (whō for dutie & honors sake, in respect of many his speciall fauors towards my selfe I here reēmber) sent & directed to you by letter, to doe nothing, that might tēd to my discourage or troble, bearing my

selfe

ſelf in that lawful, & anſwerable ſort wherin I haue alwayes ſquared, & meaſured the ſeuerall parts of my miniſtratiō: & whether I haue done ſo or not, I referre the iudgement to the teſtimonies of all indifferent perſons not ſurpriſed with malice towards vs, nor tranſported with parciallitie to the cōtrary factiō, yea to your ſelf, & your own ſentēce, when the time ſhal come, and occaſion ſhal yeeld it ſelf, to impart with you the true, & perfect knowledge, of all late accidentes, touching both ſides, and cauſes. In the meane time I conceiue hope of this effect, that vpon the peruſing of this parte of my poore daily labors, which with all ſubmiſſion, and regard of duetie I preſent you, your ſelfe of your wiſedome will diſcerne, what great & manifeſt vntruth the aduerſaries reportes doe carry with them, which ſpare not to charge my indeuors, with bitter inuectiues againſt perſons, and ſeditious ſpeeches againſt authoritie. and the preſent policie & gouernment of our church eſtabliſhed. *Ab vno diſce omnes*, by this one you may iudge of al my trauels: for I my ſelfe in the feare of God do proteſt, & the common audience of our aſſēblies, can & wil witnes, that ꝑ maner & method, vſed and to be ſeen here-

Aeneid, lib. 2.

herein, hath beene, and is the true forme of my dayly practise and performance of duetie. And I am not in the appurtenances, and necessarie adiunctes of my profession so much to seeke, but that I know according to the minde of a worthy and famous Prelate of this our age, and countrey (whose name, and memorie amongst vs is better then any sweete, and excellent oyntment as the wise man speaketh) that the preaching of the Gospell standeth not in an idle and vnfruitfull discoursing of rites, and ceremonies, but in a sound deliuery, and application of doctrine to the conscience of a Christian to worke faith, and repentance in the hearers: and therefore I doubte not but that howsoeuer hitherto *Doeg* the Edomite hath curried fauour with his maister, by disclosing *Dauid*, and accusing *Abimelech* the sonne of *Ahitub*, I meane howsoeuer some whisperers haue preuayled with your good nature (for what thing by crafte is sooner abused?) wresting the same to a hard conceit, and misconstruction of vs, and our actions, yet now vpon this iust, and reasonable apologie for our selues, your grauitie will borrow,

Ioh. Iuellus, in lib. de vit. Iuel.

Eccles 7.3.

1.Sam.22.9.

row, and carry *Alexanders* two eares, one alwayes stopt, and reserued for the defendant: so shall colours be quickly distinguished from causes, and the truth of things shalbe receiued, and not the informations of those men credited, which carry in their bosomes large consciences to dispence with any report be it neuer so adulterate, tending to my preiudice. And as I doubt not of this, so I mistrust not the issue of a further thing, to wit: that although *Agrippa*, notwithstanding Pauls notable and true declaration, and the euident immerit of his bondes departed from the common hall, doing nothing in his matter, speaking well of him, and his innocencie but not deliuering him according to iustice and the honour of a king, yet your reuerend discretion, hauing discouered the pretences of the aduersarie, and hauing viewed with a good eye the vprightnes of our cause, will, not in regard of vs, but of the matter directly respectiue to the honour of God, and the health of many soules, execute with a good conscience, that iudiciall prescription, deliuered by the Lorde himsefe to *Moses*, not as pertinent to that time, and his policie

Bruson. lib. 3. cap. 10.

Acts. 26. 31. 32.

onely

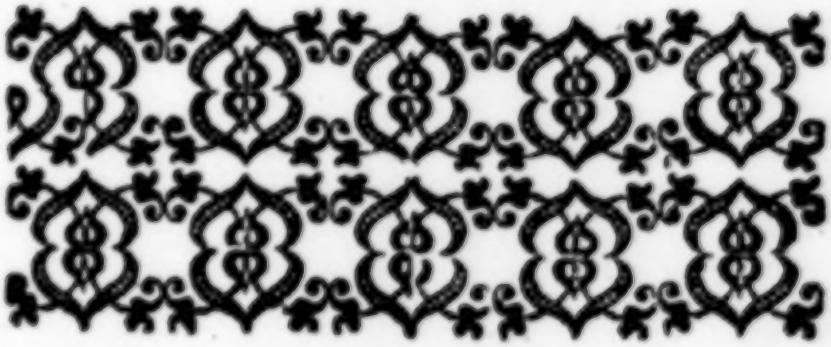
Exod.23.2. onely,but perpetuall for all ages, thou ſhalt not agree in a controuerſie, to decline after many and ouerthrowe the truth. And in ſo doing I hope the time ſhall come, wherein as in the dayes of *Salomon* a man may dwell without feare vnder his vine, and figtree, from Dan euen to Beerſheba: and thus hauing hope for my ſupport I reſt for this preſent,commending my ſelf to your good opinion,and ſpeech,and my poore labor to your protection: requeſting vpon the ouerſight, rather your partiall, then equall iudgment, becauſe of the imperfections ſcattered in the ſame: the graunt whereof I ſhall take and repute,not onely as a ſufficient recompence and ſatiſfaction for this paines,but a ſpurre and prouocation alſo in time by the will of God, to ſhadowe vnder the breadth of your winges, matters of more ſubſtance, and greater perfection. The God and father of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, the ſheepehearde, and Biſhoppe of our ſoules, who hath furniſhed you with many good graces, multiplie the ſame in you with all things neceſſarie for your roome,and place,that God by you in al your actiōs may be glorified,the truth of his

1.Kings 4. 25.

his worde and mysteries ratified, the faithfull disposers thereof cherished and couraged, the idle and ignorant ministers (the bane of our Church) reformed, and your selfe in the ende blessed with endlesse felicitie. London. May the 17. 1588.

The Lordes vnworthy seruant,
and your suppliant, prepared for all godly commaundements and duties.

PHILIP IONES.



The text.

Let the brother of lowe degree reioyce in that he is exalted.

Againe he that is rich in that he is made low: for as the flower of the grasse shall he vanish away. *Iames 1. verse 9. 10.*

The first Sermon.

YE heard in my reading the last Sabbath, by occasion of the forerunning verse, how odious before God, & hatefull in his sight, the sinne of hypocrisie, and dubblenesse of mind is: especially in religion, & in the seruice of God: when men will beare fayre wether with the world, and seeme to carry good mindes, and vpright affections towards Sion, the true Church of God, and yet secretly worke the daũgerous effect of thornes and prickes to the sides thereof. As also when men wil make their profession, and religion, as it were a shipmans hose, and an indiferent thing, swearing by the Lord, and by Malcham, and halting betwixt two opinions, as the people whome sometimes Eliah the Prophet sharpely reproued because they cared not whether

Zephan. 1. 5.

1 Kings. 18. 21.

they worshipped God, or Baall, and past not whether they serued God altogether, or in parte, with whom many of this our age doe iumpe, & ioyne hands, who make conscience of no religion: for whether it be the light of ye Gospel, or the blindnes of poperie and superstition that preuayleth, they esteeme not, so that it serue for their commoditie, and auantage, hauing a heart, and a heart, as the Greeke worde significantly importeth, one for the olde lawe, and another for the newe learning, as they tearme it. But we shewed, and prooued both by testimonies, & examples, that as the sinne of such men is great, so is their ende horrible, and their punishment greeuous many times in this life. And in the conclusion of my former lecture, it was further declared, that as it hapeneth in the ordinarie vse, or rather abuse of othes, that the man which is a common swearer will not sticke sometimes for his profite to forsweare himselfe, the same sinne being increased by practise, and by custome growen to an habite in him: and as it comes to passe also amongst murderers, who making no conscience of the slaughter of innocent children, or seruants, will make no bones to proceede further, namely to murd

Δίκαυλος.

bryue their hands in the guiltlesse blood of greater personages, as appeareth by the parable of the vineyard let out to the husbandmen, who hauing slayne the houshoulders seruants, did not spare to commit the like outrage, against his sonne, and heyre, representing the progresse of malice in the Iewes, who hauing murdred the prophets, crucified at last the Messias also, the heyre of all things, & so fulfilled the measure of their fathers: euen so it falleth out in the sinne of hypocrisie, that he that commonly exerciseth double dealing, and dissimulation in worldly matters, will smell also of the same in the seruice of God, putting no difference betwixt the holinesse of religion, and the prophanenesse of his ordinarie dealings: so that whether he vseth prayer, or frequenteth sermons to heare, or whether he fasteth, and giueth almes, or whatsoeuer else is done by him in this case, it is done in that sort as the counterfaite shewe of great deuotion was made by the people of Iuda, who although they vsed to say the Lord liueth, yet they did sweare falsely, & as in that one, so in al other religious mattters, they plaide the hypocrits. And of such ý prophet Dauid speaketh in ý excellent Psalme, contayning the

Mat. 21. 38. &c.

Heb. 1. 2.

Mat. 23. 32.

Ier. 5. 2.

summe of al the benefites of the Lord, shewed, and extended to his people the posteritie of Abraham, they remembred (saith he) that God was their strength, and the most high God their redeemer, but they flattered him with their mouth, and dissembled with him with their tongue, for their heart was not vpright with him, neither were they faithfull in his couenant. Meaning that their double dealing in his seruice was such, and so great, as that they ranne vnto him, and sought him early, as though they had beene very holy, and religious, but all was for feare of punishment, and not for any hearty loue, or obedience, that they did carry towards God. Whereby together with other reasons, I confirmed the former sententious speech of Iames in the 8. verse, that a double minded man is vnstable not in one but in all his wayes: and so inferring an exhortation, and direction, to pray vnto God to auoid, and flye from all the pointes and partes of hypocrisie, and doubleness of heart, I ended for that time. Yet now followeth in the 9. verse. Let the brother of lowe degree reioyce. &c. In which words, the Apostle in my opinion seemeth to returne to the argument of ioy and pati-

Psal. 78. 35. 36. 37.

ence

ence to be vsed of vs in our afflictions wherof as you haue already heard, he intreated before in the 2.3.& 4. verses of this present chapter. Which argument he hath hitherto left, & broken of, with purpose to take away such obiections as might be made and framed preiudiciall to the same doctrine and matter. For if you would for a triall as it were strike, and race out the verses interposed betwixt this 9. and the 4. then it would euidently appeare, and ye should easily finde that this present verse is in good order and artificiall method, added & applied to the 4. verse: for there the Apostle speaketh of patience, & of perfection in patience consisting in perseuerance in the time of trouble and aduersitie, and now in this verse he comes backe againe to the same argument, and proceedeth therein for the further comfort & consolation of the afflicted. And knowing that amongst all the crosses and calamities of this life, the crosse of pouertie and of wãt in respect of cõmon necessaries, is both very generall and very grieuous also, yea to the weake shoulders of flesh & blood almost intollerable, insomuch that many times, yea dayly we see those of that state, which are not preuented with the grace of God nor go-

uerned by the spirit, and so not perswaded to relie vppon the prouidence of God, and to content themselues with their poore condition, do breake the walles of obedience, and runne headlong into vnlawful actions and thereby into the daunger of the lawes, seeking to satisfie themselues by theefte, and to relieue themselues by robbery, and oftentimes murther the consequence thereof, rather then stand to the miseries, and indigengencies of their vnfortunate place, the holy Apostle hauing a special consideration hereof, doth heare by his counsell, and perswasion labour to cure this malady, and to apply a salue to the sore of the poore man, deliuering his mind freely and sufficiently in the matter. And if we do w̃ diligence consider, and with iudgment examine the contents of these verses, we shal finde ý the Apostle doth heare make, & institute a cõparison betwixt those two diuers things, which oftentimes are occasions of temptations & prouocations to some disorders & mischiefes in those men which are within the compasse of the same, namely pouertie, & riches, of the first whereof he speakes in this 9. verse, of ý other in the sequell of the place, so that I take the disposition and order of these verses consisting of

three

three seueral points to be this. First ý Apostle doth enter into a course of schooling the poore man shewing him by direction, with what minde he is to take, and to beare the crosse of his pouertie and howe to behaue himselfe in the state and time of his low degree: that is, he is not to fixe his eyes, and to looke onely vpon the vilenesse, and basenesse of his condition, and to dwell still vpon the consideration of his pinching necessities, but he is to take another, and better course, namely to erecte and lifte vp his minde in some heauenly meditation, to take as it were a spirituall view of that immortall inheritance, and celestiall possession, wherein he shal be ioyned partener with al the faithfull and children of God, if he practise contentation, patience, obedience, & godlines in ý course of ý simple life, whereby it pleaseth God for a time to try & to humble him. In ý second place he vndertaketh ý admonishing & aduising of ý rich man also, teaching him w̃ what mind he is to take, & in what sort to vse the blessing, & abundance of his riches, to wit, he is not by occasiõ therof to craft himself in his conceit, & to lift himself vp in an opiniõ of his happines, as though ý his welth shouldfor euer continue w̃ him, & he with it,

but he is to know that as his life is vncertaine, so is his riches, forasmuch as the Lord giueth both, and taketh both away at his pleasure: so that he is not to ware proud or to growe arrogant, vpon the tast and feeling of the felicitie of this life, but rather to be meekly spirited, in ẏ time of his greatest florishing, as knowing that although he be now at this present in much prosperitie, & hoysed vp to the top and mount of good fortune, yet he may suddenly be turned downe to miserie, and stript of all that now he possesseth. Thirdly, and lastly, least the Apostle should seeme to speak this without his warrant and euidence, he doth in the latter parte of the tenthe verse, produce a reason as an amplification of the doctrine, to fortifie his assertion withall, which is done by way of similitude consisting of the qualitie and natur of a common flower of the grasse, representing the weake state, and short durance of humane prosperitie: then which flower ye know your selues there is nothing more mutable, and subiect to a change, by reason of the small force, and substance that it hath to abide, and stand, in his beautie: for although it spread it selfe gloriously in the morning, and seemie to be the thing, where-

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in nature hath labored to shew all her skill, yet the heate of the sunne when it riseth ouermatcheth the glorie thereof, and makes it quickly to wither, and come to nothing. Such is the rich man, and his riches. So that by this onely diuision, and resolutiõ of the verses ye may will conceiue what notable, and necessary matter is lodged and contayned in them. Being such, as doth concerne all estates, and respect all degrees, high and lowe, rich and poore, the noble personage and the poorest cotager, all and euery one may herehence learne a direction for his life, and furnish his minde with a sufficient treasure of instructions, how & after what maner to dispose of himselfe, and his doings in the best sort to the glorie of God, and the euerlasting comfore of his soule. The poore man because of his wants and defectes is not to despaire: the rich man by reason of his aboundance, and superfluities is not to presume of himselfe, and his abilitie: the honorable is to temper his high degree with humblenesse of minde, the lazar or miserable creature, to mitigate, and qualifie his smart by the vse of patience, as hereafter in the processe of our speech yee shall see, by the grace of God,

more at large.

Concerning therefore the first of our parts, although the Apostles phrase be here singuler, seeming to speake of some special or perticuler person, yet by cōferring other places with it of the same forme of wordes, and by considering the reach of the doctrine to extend generally to all, I doubt not but they are plurally to be taken, and construed. For the propositiō being indefinite, and the consequence of the place so iointly, and sensibly depending vpon the precedence it cannot be but equiualent, and the same with an vniuersall speech. To acquaint you with my meaning in plaine termes, albeit the Apostle doth heare say let the poore man, or brother of lowe degree reioyce, it is all one, or as much as if he had said, let al poore men, and all brethren of low degree reioyce, because that, which he requireth at the hands of one of that sort, he looketh for of all, and if ye do with diligence note, and with iudgment cōsider the scripture speeches, ye shall in many places light vpon wordes of the same course & nature, deliuered in such singuler maner and yet importing, and including vniuersall constructions. In that the common name of a poore man is not heare vsed, but the appel-

lation

lation of a brother, it may teach vs, what is to bee thought of such a one vpon whom it hath pleased God to impose, and lay the crosse of pouertie, inwhich case to bee taught, and informed, I take it to be very requisite, and necessary for many of vs: for we in our common iudgments are very carnall, and in our opinions foolish, who vse to measure the worthines of a man by the appearãce, and vpon the sight and view of his misery doe by and by pronounce him a wicked person, a vicious liuer, a man accursed, and punished in such sort deseruedly for his sins, when as the purpose of God in the visiting of many with his crosses, is not so much to notifie, and confirme to the world the deserte in them of such afflictiõs, but either to make proofe & trial of their faith, or else to conuert their humiliations to other good purposes, seruing for his glory & their bettering. I cõfesse ỳ there is not one man amõgst the sons of men cõsisting al of corrupt & mortall matter so holy, and righteouse as that hee deserueth not any punishment or correction, if the Lorde wouldd straightly marke iniquities, & do nothing but that, which the rules of his iustice doe prescribe, who then should stand; as the prophet speakes: but forasmuch Psal.130.3.

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as it hath pleased God in the aboundance of his loue, to take away the curse of the lawe due for sinne by the death of his sonne and not to impute sinne to him that beleeueth, and seeing the very faithfull themselues are subiect to crosses and afflictions sundrie wayes, and in greater measure subiect then the children of vnbelefe, it cannot be that troubles and calamities should alwayes be demonstrations of the wrath of God, or testimonies of great sinnes in those, whose shoulders lye vnder such burdens. But we are otherwise to thinke, that sometimes God doth discipline his children by the vse of his rodde for some secret sinnes, and imperfections which themselues doe not espie: sometimes hee doth before hande preuent their sins the fruit of that corrupion, which lyeth hidde in them and would otherwise break forth, except by sicknesse, pouertie, imprisonment, hunger, or such like meanes they be admonished, and restrayned: sometimes he hath respect to his owne glorie, beginning with iudgment at his owne house, least he should seeme to approue those sins in his elect, which his iustice doth more sharpely punish in the reprobates: somtimes he doth suffer Satan that roaring Lyon

his

his ministers, to haue after a sorte power ouer the states, and bodies of his children for the experiment of their constancie, and the instruction of others: and sometimes also he doth vse the daungers, & extremities of the saints, as occasions to shew forth his owne power, glorie, mercie, wisedome, and righteousnesse in his church, by miraculous deliuerances, bringing them into manifest perils, and yet finding meanes to preserue them beyond the hope and opinions of men. These together with other intentions in the workes of God if they be well considered, will bridle the ouerlashing humor of carnall iudgment, and leaue no roote of cause in the minde of any man, to take such persons for sinners, and dispised of God, whose liues are heare subiect to some externall difficulties. In the holy storie of Iob, we read, that when his three friendes, hearing of the euil that was come vnto him, came from their places to see him, and to lament his case with him, & beheld the great and straunge miserie whereunto hee was brought, and the lamentable plight wherein he stood, they were so caried away with the streame of a false imagination, and conceit concerning him that whereas before they

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tooke him for an vpright, and iust man, and
hygh in the fauour & loue of God, they now
vpon the appearance iudged him to be an hy-
pocrite, and spared not rashly to affirme, that
he was in that sort & measure iustly plagued
of God for his his sins: for Eliphaz ý Teman-
ite wished him to remēber and cal to minde
who euer perished being an innocēt, or where
Iob.4.7. ý vpright were destroied. I haue seen it, said
he ý they which plow iniquitie, and sow wic-
kednes, do reape the same, so cōcluding, that
Iob could not be innocent or vpright or free
from wickednes, because the fruit & effect of
such misfortunes, & calamities was fallen
vpō him. And I doubt not but ý in the same
Eliphaz is a patterne of al carnally minded,
& ignorantly conceited worldlings, who vse
cōmonly to draw arguments from the afflic-
tions of the children of God, cēsuring there-
upon ý they are not good, nor honest, nor such
as they would seeme to be, because they liue
not in such a free, & happy, & glorious state of
life, as others doe. Wherin they discouer thē-
selues to be as brutish, & barbarous, as those
Now called Malta. barbarians of the Ile of Melita, whereinto
Paul happened after his escape from ship-
wracke, who vpon the leaping of a Viper
Acts.28.4. vpon his hande, from the fire, condemned
him

him by & by for a murderer, & for such a one as vengeance would not suffer to liue. This is in cõmon ꝑ rash verdits of our Atheistes, Epicures, Libertines, & prophane Gospellers, who respecting nothing but the outward accident, and not considering by reason of their naturall blindnes the course of God in his workes commit sinne in their sentences, speaking good of euill, and euill of good, ill of the righteous, & well of the couetous whom God abhorreth. They may learne to correct their erroneous iudgments both by the sequell of that place of the Acts before cited, and by the answere of Iob, who to purge himselfe, & to defend his innocencie against the ouerhastie opinions of his friends affirmed that ꝑ Lord knew his way & tryed him & that he should come forth like the golde: meaning ꝑ although the world was ignorãt of the true cause of his miserie, yet ꝑ knowledge therof was w̃ the Lord, who vsed the same as a mean to bring to passe his greater profite. Let vs make some vse then of this matter for our selues, & know assuredly, ꝑ as on the one side it is no sufficient reason to proue the vertue, and goodnes of a man because hee hath welth and riches in possession, so on the other side it is no necessary

Ier.5.10.

Iob.23.10.

con-

conclusion to condemne a man for wicked, and vnrighteouse, because he is afflicted with pouertie and lacke of sufficient relicte for himselfe, the remembrance, and consideration wherof, wil work in vs a charitable, and Christian opinion concerning our poore brethren, not to thinke that they are the worse men in the sight of God because of their harde happe in that case, they are our brethren still, in profession, and essence, flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, of the same proportion in making, and of the same mettle in substance, whereof we our selues bee wee neuer so daintie, are created, and therefore they are not to be vsed of vs with such contempt and indignitie as they receiue generally of the worlde: forasmuch as it is not their pouertie that doth either alter their nature which is still common with ours, or
Heb.12.6. prouc them to be disfauored of the Lord, the case so standing, that whom God loueth he chasteneth, and hee scourgeth euery sonne that he receiueth, and the affliction of a base estate, is many times to the man rather an argument of the loue of God then a testimonie of his wrath: as appeareth expressly by the wordes of the Prophet Dauid, who being greeuously afflicted himselfe, & know-

ing

ing the purpose of God therein sufficiently, doth pronounce a blessing to those that did pittie his case, and conceiue a good opinion of him, and of all those, which should be in the like sort visited: for he breaketh forth into this effectuall speech, blessed is he that iudgeth wisely of the poore, the Lorde shall deliuer him in the time of trouble. Meaning such a one as doth not condemne that man for accursed whom God doth afflict with pouertie knowing that there are many causes, why his hand is in such sort heauie vpon a man. Secondly by this appellation and title of brother which the Apostle doth heere apply to the poore man, we may learne by his example how to vse our words, and temper our speeches concerning men of base place, and state. To giue them the best stile that we can, and to auoyd the intemperate humours of many disdainfull persons, who cannot frame their tongues to any indifferent words respecting their inferiors, but reuile them, and taunte them, and loade them with such contemptuous tearmes, as are neither comely in their owne mouthes, nor in any sorte fitting the persons towardes whom they vse such immoderation. Salomon affirmeth that he that hath knowledge spareth

Psal.41.1.

Prou.17.27.

his

Iames.4.11. his words. And our Apostle Iames will haue vs in no case to speake euil one of another. A third matter there is also in these wordes, which is not to be omitted without note and obseruation, namely that in the Apostles directions heere to the poore man, and in the vse of his name, he doth not cal him the poore brother, or beggerly brother, but the brother of low degree, although in so doing it may seeme that part of his meaning is to increase and magnifie the glorious exaltation of such a man to the kingdome of God, which by a comparison made with a precedent baseness, is made so much the more high and magnificent, by how much the more low and simple his condition was before in the world, because that contrary things being one set against another, are then most cleerely and perfectly seen what they are, yet I doubt not but that the commodities of the low estate of a poore man, are heere insinuated, and regarded by the vse of the phrase: for the low degree of a man, although it bee accompanied with some wants in respecte of the abundance of the richer sorte, who are commonly destitute of nothing seruing to the outward prosperitie of this life, yet it is free from those hazardes, and perilles,

where-

wherunto the hygh estate of the welthy is continually subiecte. For they may in good sense bee compared to hyghe trees scituated and planted in the toppes of mountayns, which by reason of their place lye open to euery winde that bloweth, and euery storme that arysleth, yea a little puffe of the ayre maketh them to shake, and to tremble: but the poorer sorte are with good probabilitie resembled to lowe shrubbes, or bushes growing in the vallies vnder the winges, and defence of the hilles, which by reason of their lowe growth, are safe from the raging storme, and beating tempest, they are not assaulted with the feercenesse of euery whirlewinde, they are not beaten with the droppes of euery scouring showre, they stand and spring in quiet, and safetye, when the highe Cedars must needes receiue euery wether, and refuse none, and therefore are many times by contrary and furious windes rent and torne, and so preuented of further increase. And many times we see great and mightie trees by violence of the wind ouerthrowen broken and pluckt vp by the rootes, seldome or neuer doth the like ouerthrowe happen to a lowe and litle bush. Againe the hygher & statelier the tree

is the more terible is his fall, and the more signe, and impression thereof doth he make in the earth: the bush or bramble suppose he be rooted vp and throwen downe hee falles without any harme, and perceth not. And againe if a great tree fall, all the bowes and branches, that are on his falling parte are bruised, and crusht vnder him: but so is it not in the shrubbe: for as his leaues be few and his branches small, so is his danger the lesse, and his harme none at all. All which things the riche man for his admonition, and the poore man for his comforte, are to apply to themselues. The riche man whether wee consider him in respect of his conceit, or simplie of his place, he is a high tree, in his conceit many times he is such a one, as stands within the threat of the prophet Esay. The day of the Lord of hosts is vpon al the proud and hautye, and vpon all that is exalted, and shalbe made low, euen vpon all the Cedars of Lebanon, that are high, and exalted, and vpon all the Okes of Bashan, and vpon all the high mountaines, and vpon all the hils that are lifted vp: meaning in that place by the high trees, and hils, such manner of men as are lifted vp in pride, and growen loftely minded by reason of their welth gathered by

Esay. 2. 12. 13.

cour-

couetousnesse, thinking themselues thereby to be towers, and walles, as it followeth in the fifteenth verse of that chapter, that is stronge, and mightie of themselues, not able to bee ouerthrowen. And doubtlesse many such high trees, I meane many high spirited men there are amongst vs, who being rauished, and caried away with an opinion of themselues, are altogether forgetful of their mortall state, they thinke with the king of Babell, that they shall liue for euer, they saye with Nimrodde and his company, let vs build and get vs a name, they trust in their goods, & boast themselues in the multitude of their riches, they thinke their houses and their habitations shal continue for euer, euen from generation to generation, and cal their lands by their names. But what sayeth the prophet concerning the end of such men, this their way vttereth their foolishnes, for their beautie shall consume when they shall goe from their house to the graue. And in the prophesie of Ezekiel, there is a notable place to this purpose, where the prophet speaking of the king of Ashur, affirmeth that once he was like a Cedar in Lebanon, with fayre branches, and thicke shadowing bowes, and shot vp very high, and his top was amongst

Gen.11.4.

Psal.49.6. 11.13.

Ezek.31.3.

the thicke bowes, his height was eralted a-
verse.11.12. boue all the trees of the fleeld. &c. but what
followes in the place, thus saith the Lord I
haue cast him away for his wickednesse, his
branches are fallen, his bowes are broken,
all the people of the earth are departed from
his shadowe, and haue forsaken him, yea hee
is gone downe to hell. This is the ende of
such a highe tree, and the effect of such lofti-
nesse, verifying that famous sentence of Sa-
Prou.16.16. lomon in his Prouerbs, that pride goeth
before destruction, and an high minde be-
fore the fall. Which thing, is of some conse-
quence to be learned of all men for warning,
and to bee considered of such men for amen-
dement, as are subiecte to this sinne: who
if they cannot, and care not to reforme them
selues by that which already hath been spo-
ken yet they are to remember further the
iudgment of that highe tree, that proude
king Nebuchadnezar, who in the prophe-
Esay.14.13. sie of Esay is compared with Lucifer,
which saide in his heart, I will climbe vp
into heauen, and eralte my throne besides
the starres of God &c. But what followeth:
thou shalt bee brought downe to the ground
and to the sides of the pitte, and more of his
destruction yee shall finde, if yee reade
the

the chapter. Nowe in place and degree, the riche man also is a high tree, and by reason thereof subiecte to many inconueniences: euery sharpe winde of alteration in the common wealth, of inuasions of the enimie, and of other grieuous accidents driueth vpon him: and not so onely, but in other respectes his heigth is also daungerous. For an hard iudgment shall they haue that beare rule, so sayeth the wise man: and againe, for the mightie abideth the sorer triall: and againe, the mightie shalbe mightilie tormented, but hee that is most lowe is worthy of mercie. The poore man being a lowe shrubbe or bushe is not so subiecte to the Are, to mutations, to iudgmentes, hee escapeth in safetie when the riche man is rifled, crushed, and by his mightie fall, like a greate stone from the toppe of the building is dashed into many peeces, and so his fall made vnrecouerable: and therefore it is better in my opinion to bee Abstemius his mule, though carrying great burdens of wood euery day with peace and safetie, then bee his palfrey cladde in purple, adorned with furniture of Golde, and fedde with the best prouinder, and subiecte to the scarres and wounds, receiued commonly

Wisd. 6. 5. 8. 6.

Verse. 6.

Abstemij fabula.

in the warres. And this being considered I doe not see why the brother of lowe degree that is, the poore man, should not according to the Apostles wordes, rather be glad then any way pensiue, forasmuch as hee stands farre of from thundring, and gunshotte: as his state is lowe, so are his mischieses few, as his degree is not high, so his fall is not to be feared: but bee it that he doth fall, yet being within the compasse of the Lords protection, it is no otherwise then the pro-
Psal.37. 24. phet Dauid speaketh, though hee fall hee shall not be cut off, for the Lord putteth vnder his hand, the Lord supporteth, and shoreth him vp so that in his fall there is no harme. The speciall doctrine then that this consideration, and matter yeeldeth, is not onely a comforte to the poore man, to holde himselfe contented with his state, because of the benefite, and commoditie of safetye which it beareth in diuers respectes, but a perswasion & counsell also to the rich man, not to be caried away with the ytching vayn of ambition, not to hunt with greedinesse after promotion, not to bee possessed with such vayneglorious humors, as were the Scribes, and the Pharisies, who loued the
Mat.23.6.7. cheife places at feastes and the highest seats

in

in the assemblies, and greetinges in the market, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi. It is an inreuocable decree, that whosoeuer will exalte himselfe shalbe brought low, and humbled. Somewhat it was that Iotham the yongest sonne of Ierubbaal, standing in the toppe of mount Gerizim, after that Abimelech the Tyrant had vsurped the kingdome and slaine his brethren the sonnes of Ierubbaal about 70. persons vpon one stone in propounding his parable to the men of Shechem affirmed, that when the trees went out to consult about the electing, and annointing of a king ouer them, it was neither the oliue that would leaue his fatnesse, nor the figge tree his sweetnesse, nor the vine his wine, none of these trees, being indeed worthy of preferm̃ēt would aduance themselues to the gouernement and kingdome, but the contemptible bramble and scratching briyer whereunto Iotham likened the same Abimelech, he in the pride of his heart and the arrogancie of his stomacke, would needes take vpon him the state and be Lorde ouer the rest, not contenting himselfe with that place, which nature and birth had assigned him: but his highe conceite went before his fal and his ambitious spirit

verse. 12.

Iudges. 9. 8.

was

was rewarded with a miserable destruction. And therefore in this case the answere of Dauid to Michal his wife, who despised him because of his dauncing, and reioycing and prayſing of God before ý Arke, is generally
2.Sam.6.22 cõmended I wil be yet more vile said he thé thus, & wilbe low in mine own sighe, and of the very same maide seruants which thou hast spoken of shall I be had in honour. So that the first steppe to true honour in deed is the practise of lowlinesse, and a minde free from the infection of an ambitious appetite, by the vse whereof, although a man may peradventure sometimes by the patiẽce of God aspire to dignities, and offices of high place, yet the same is nothing else, but a meane and preparatiue to a greater mischiefe, and ouerthrowe. So that my meaning in this matter may bee easily conceiued, which is, not to condemne a lawfull authoritie, nor to dissuade any man from the vndertaking of such roomes of credit and estimation as are of greate necessitie in the common wealth, and profitable for the peace and prosperitie of the same, but my purpose onely is by occasion of my terte to reproue the extremitie, which consisteth in a thyrst

and

and hunger to be aloft and to exceeded the common state of men: when a man following the vnbridled sway of his proud conceit doth disdayne the societie, and company of his honest brethren, as not brooking any equalitie: saying with Adonijah the sonne of Haggith I will be king, and with Aaman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, all the honour, and glory that I haue, doth not auaile me, as long as I see Mordecaye the Iew sitting at the kings gate. This is it that I speake of, and against a climing humor, a brambles spirite, a disposition inclining to pretheminence, not with intent to doe any common good to the countrey, but with purpose onely to feede, and satisfie the roote of arrogancie, and ambition, to commaund all men, and to be subiect to no man. Which I take to be reproued by him, whose life was the spectacle and president of all humilitie, ye receiue honour one of another, and seeke not the honour that cõmeth of God. Which is a thing generally founde in these dayes, and therefore requires a generall warning. For euen amongst vs there are those, who although they are not furnished with any excellent gifte or grace of God, and haue nothinge in them deseruing commendation,

1. Kings. 1. 5.

Hester 5. 13.

Iohn 5. 44.

saue

saue onely a little more money, and welth then their neighbours haue, yet they are so vnreasonably ledde away with the force of this insolent conceit, as that they vouchsafe not a good looke towards those, who albeit they possesse not so much wealth, yet they practise more vertue, and honestie, then themselues. And there are many petty Absolons also florishing amongst vs, nothing but the crowne and kingdome, I meane the Magistracye, and roome of Justice can content them, insomuch that there is no rest of their continuall laborings, till they come to sitte downe in the chayre of Dauid, in that reuerend place which requireth a great measure of iudgment, wisedome, experience, knowledge, and conscience, from all which things they are as farre, as they are neere vnto the gall and bitternesse of presumption. So that I see the date of that auncient prophesie of the holy Apostle out, and expired, who long agoe foresawe, that in the last dayes there should come perilous times, men should bee louers of their owne selues, couetous, boasters, proud &c. intemperate, fierce, no louers at all of them ý are good, heady, high minded louers of pleasure more then louers of God: the full accomplishment of which prophesie

2.Tim.3.1.

who

whosoeuer seeth not, seeth nothing. But as the Apostle prophesied of such men, so may we prophesie of the ende of them, not vndertaking the spirites of prophetes, but collecting by the ends of other men, who in our remembrance were in such sorte affected, and therefore euen in this life tasted the bitter fruite of their owne workes and qualities, that the reward whereof the Apostle heere speaketh, and promiseth remayning for the brother of low degree, which is exaltation, and great glorye, shalbe no parte of their recompence, because they smell not of the swete spirite of humilitie, which is the beginning, and steppe to that high degree of true honour, and felicitie, which is proper onely to such, and reserued onely for such, as doe decke themselues inwardly with lowlinesse of mind and humble them selues vnder the mightie hand of God, to whom there is a promise of exalting made in due & conuenient time. The Apostle hauing thus vsed the name of the poore man, doth nowe proceed to his purpose, namely to direct him to that thing, which in the time of his pouertie he is to practise, & that is ioy, for so it followeth in the verse. Let the brother of lowe degree reioyce. He might haue said let him

1. Pet. 5. 5. 6.

not

not bee sorie, or let him not bee impatient, or let him contente himselfe, or any such like thing, which might well haue agreed both with his intent and with the poore mans qualitie, but hee vseth here a word of greater effect and force, Let him reioyce, wherby he doth labour to remoue all sorrow and sadnes from the minde of the poore man, wishing him not to bee heauy in heart, nor dolefull in conceit, but rather to plucke vp his spirite, to bee of good cheer, and comfort, yea to conceiue gladnesse in the time of his greatest smarte of pouertie, vpon consideration of the high degree of glorie & felicitie whereunto it is the purpose of God to exalte him, wherchence euery one, that is subiect to the crosse of pouertie may draw out for himselfe a singuler consolation, and learne withall how he is best to behaue himselfe, when his shoulders are crusht with the same burden, and yoke, how to support, and strengthen himselfe, least he fall into these daungerous mischieses and inconueniences, which the maior part of that sorte, being destitute of grace & gouernement, doe daily runne into: his best course is, to fixe his eyes, by the vse of his hope & faith vpon the crown of righteousnes, which ye Lord the righteous

Iudge

Iudge hath laid vp, and wil giue to al those that loue his appearing, and in a ioyfull expectation of the same, doe with quietnesse sustayne, and with patience goe thorow this speciall affliction, knowing that it pleaseth God sometimes to vse the same as a meane or instrument to bring a man to the knowledge of himself, to faith, repentance, prayer, obedience, and other Christian ductes, and at the last to the end of his faith, which is the saluation of his soule. So that although I must needes confesse that on the one side the drinking of this bitter cup, and the feeling of the miseries of this state may discourage a man, and driue him to the doore of faintnes, and almost dispayre, yet on the other side the remembrance of the promised glorie of God to come, and assuredly to be shewed may as a sweete and pleasant draught extinguish the former bitternesse, and turne the strong streame of impatiencie into a quietnesse of contentation, to effectuate therby that same practise of ioy whereunto he is heere, as it were by the hande of the Apostle ledde and conducted in the mides of his calamitie. And for the better helpe and furtherance of the poore man to this good vse and practise, and to cause him both the more rea-

dily,

dily, and the more plentifully also to conceiue this ioy he is with some diligence to ponder with himselfe the most louing course that it hath pleased God to take with him ouer and aboue the maner of dealing hee vseth with and towards the rich man. For whereas he is most vsually in the leaues of the scriptures reproued, threatned, condemned, and wished to mourne and lament, the poore man contrarywise is comforted, incouraged, cõmended, and willed to reioice, as in this place. In the fift chapter of this Epistle, Iames singes another maner of songe to the richer sort: goe too now ye rich men weep and houle for the miseries which shall come vpon you, your riches are corrupt, and your garmentes are motheaten, your gold and siluer is cancred, and the rust of them shalbe a witnesse against you, and shall eate your flesh as it were fire. &c. which wordes I could wish were written in some place obiect to the eyes of al of that sorte, that seeing of themselues they will not remember, yet by this meanes they might alwayes bee admonished of their great abuses committed in the blessings of God, and of the plagues which those abuses will bring vpon them without speedy, and harty repentance. But

Verse. 1. 2.

for

for our vse, I note thus much by comparing these two places together: that the common sort of rich men are wonderfully deceiued in their opinion, and doe mightily erre in their conceite, who imagine that the onely true ioy and pleasure consisteth in the possession of riches, and in the inioy of wealth, to be able to tell much money, to produce good store of golde, to be able to buy, and buildc, and by continuall purchase to ioyne land to lande, house to house, and Lordshippe to Lordshippe, so to liue, and dwell as princes of the earth, this is the mother of ioye amongst them: by occasion whereof they sing and reioyce and slay oxen, and kill sheepe, & eate flesh, and drinke wine, and say, let vs eate and drinke for to morow we shall die: but this ioy proceeding not from God nor his spirite, who is the Author and fountaine of all Christian and lawfull reioycing, is no true ioy, but rather a madnes and frantikenes, when as men forgetting themselues, and not considering the vanitie of their mindes, the breuitie of their pleasures, and the vncertainty of prosperity, and carnall wealth, doe reioyce in their boastings, and in the workes of their owne handes, yea in a thing of nought and say, haue not we got-

Esai. 22. 13.

Iames 4. 16.
Act. 7. 41.

Amos 6.13. ten vs horns by our owne strength? I deny not but that riches being well vsed, and applied to their right endes, namely to the furtherance of Gods glory, the preferment of his worde, the profite of his Church, the releefe of the poore, and such other good & holie purposes a man in the performance of these dueties, may reioyce with thankes to God, that it pleased him to work in his heart such acceptable motions, and to dispose him to the exercise of the fruites of his faith for the discharge of his conscience, and the prouocation of others to the like obedience, but to thinke that where wealth and prosperitie is abused, beeing conuerted to the nourishing of pride, prodigalitie, banquetting, couetousnesse, oppression, vsurie, reuengement, and such like wicked actions, the pleasure which men take, and the ioy which they conceiue to be good or honest, or any way cõmendable, is an opinion very absurd, and vnworthy the braine of a Christian. And yet there are such amongst vs, who being hoodwinked with the vayle of carnall conceite, doe as it were clappe their handes, and throwe vp their cappes at their good fortune, triumphing in the increase of their wealth and making bankets because of their

abun-

abundance, and goe no further, eyther to the acknowledging of the goodnes of God, from whence all good thinges proceede, or to the directing of their riches to suche vses as by duetie, and conscience they are bounde vnto. In suche cases they ought rather to weep and howle as Iames speaketh, because all good sense and feeling is taken away from them, and their heartes not moued by the blessinges of God towardes them, to bee thankefull to him for the same, and to fructifie in good workes to the praise of his name, and the good of his Church. Againe on the other side also, the poore man is not free from errour, nor to bee excused in his opinion, who by reason of the wantes of his state, and the manifolde miseries which by compulsion hee is driuen to sustaine, doeth quite banishe from his heart all ioy, and gladnes, applying no comfort to his mynde, no peace to his spirites, no solace to his soule, but passing his time in miserable carefulnesse, and languishing by the force of his imagination. Hee is in this case for his correction, and remedie, to haue recourse to the word of God, and to deriue out for himselfe those sweet promises, which are directly made and leueled therein towards him, to

keepe him from all such mischiefes, as without the helpe and stay thereof, he might dangerously fall into. Salomon that prince of peace, and of wisedome also, in his booke of Prouerbes, or notable sentences, affirmeth
Prou.15.16 that a little with the feare of the Lorde, is better then great treasure, & trouble therewith, as commonly it happeneth to the richer sort, who take not so much payne to get as they are disquieted with carke, and care, to preserue and increase that which they haue gotten, and therefore the spirite of God
1.Tim.6.10. by the Apostle condemneth them, as men hauing pierced themselues thorow with many sorowes, reaping an euill conscience, as the fruite or harueſt of their couetous labours.
Psal.37. The Prophet Dauid also in that excellent Psalme which containeth matter of incouragement, and consolation, to such as marke and grieue at the prosperitie of the vngodly, and doe after a sort stagger in faith because of the contrary, which is affliction, & crosses, wherewith the children of God are alwayes compassed, hee doeth amongest other things minister a comfort to the heart, and conscience of the weake, like and e-
verse 16. quall with that of Salomon, pronouncing that a small thing vnto the iust man is better

ter then great riches to the wicked, & mighte. The reason is, because the iust man, although he be poore in condition, yet hee is riche in spirite and minde, because he dependeth vppon the promise and prouidence of God, and contenteth himselfe with his small portion. But the vnrighteous man, though possessing much externall wealth is nothing so blessed nor happie as the poore man because he is neuer satisfied: he is like vnto the horseleech, who hath two daughters crying, giue, giue, he is like vnto the barren wombe, and the graue which will neuer bee full, and like to a man that hath the dropsie, who the more he drinketh, thinking thereby to extinguish his thyrst, the more hee doeth increase the drienesse thereof, so the couetous riche man, the more hee hath, the more hee wanteth, and the more hee abounderh, the more he thinketh himselfe destitute, & therefore careth not what vnlawfulll meanes hee vseth to make his commoditie, hauing no feeling of conscience, and no sparkle of the feare of God in him. And therfore it is that the holy Apostle Paul resolutely affirmeth in this matter, that godlines is great gaine, if a man carrie a contentation, and a moderation of minde. For therein consisteth the

Prou.30.15.

1.Tim.6.6.

true sufficiencie of this life, and without it, there is nothing els but the verie plague of greedines, and of vnsatiable auarice, which is the roote of all euill. And to these places we may adde also that same protestation of the Prophet, made for the increase of his owne comfort, and of others in such sorte minded as him selfe, beyng grounded vpon the tryall and experience which he himselfe had gotten in the course and race of his whole life, professing that hee had beene young, and was then olde, yet he neuer saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seede begging bread. Which is a speeche full of sweet incouragement to the faithfull man, knowing thereby, that howsoeuer it pleaseth God for his triall to afflict him with pouertie, & externall wantes, so that hee hath not the like fulnesse and measure of releefe as the vngodlie man hath, yet he is neuer forsaken of the loue and fauour of God towards him, but is in such sorte regarded, and blessed of him, that although hee leade a poore life, and is not furnished with plentie of temporall thinges, yet that carnall want is answered, & recompēced, with store of spiritual graces, which are the onely true treasure, & riches which cannot perish, wherof ꝑ Apostle

Ibid.10.

Psal.37.25.

no doubt speaketh to ý Corinthians, when he saith concerning himselfe, & other his fellow workers, that they were as sorrowing, and yet alwayes reioycing, as hauing nothing, & yet possessing all thinges. And our Apostle Iames also vrgeth the same to the consciences of the rich, after this sorte. Hearken my beloued brethren, hath not God chosen the poore of this world, that they shoulde bee rich in faith and heyres of the kingdome which hee hath promised to them that loue him? Thereby conuincing the rich men of the worlde, of parcialitie, and euil iudgemēt in their thoughtes by their owne confession, because they knew that God had promised ý inheritance of his kingdome to the poore, & had adorned them with the riches and excellencie of faith, and yet they vsed respect of persons, yea, they despised the poore, and oppressed them by tyrannie, & drew them before iudgement seates. The like argumēt also Paul vseth in another place of the Corinthians, where speaking of the state of the Church of God in Corinth, which consisted but of meane, and simple persons, who notwithstanding confounded, and ouerthrew ý wisedome of the Scribe, & the eloquence of the disputer, and the vnderstanding of all the

2. Cor. 6. 10.

Iames 2. 5.

Math. 5. 3.

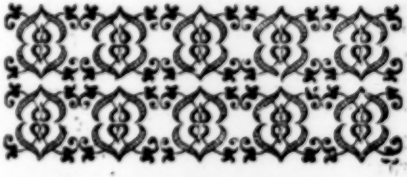
1.Cor.1.26. 27. Philosophers of Greece, he remembreth the same Church thereof in these wordes. Bethinke you see your calling, how that not manie wise men after the flesh, not many mightie, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the worlde to cõfound the wise, and the weake thinges of the world to confounde the mighty things, and vile things of the worlde, and things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea thinges which are in mans iudgement nothing, to bring to nought things that are. So that the poore man vpon the consideration of this, that although hee swimmeth not in the outwarde commodities of this life, as the wicked doe, yet possesseth in good measure the graces, and blessings of the spirite, whereby that which is otherwise wanting, and defectiue in his state is furnished in his minde, hereupon with good reason, and iustly hee may separate all sorowe, and lamentation from his heart, and dispose him selfe to some comfort, and christian reioycing, and testifie
Psalme 4.7. with the Prophet, Thou O Lord hast giuen me more ioy of heart then the sonnes of men haue had when their wheate, and their wine did abound: Let worldlings therefore tri-
verse 6. umph in the ruffe of their pleasures, and say

who

who will shew vs any good? that is plant their iope and felicitie in riches, and in frequenting the vaine delights of this life, let the poore mã solace himself with the light of the Lords countenance, & with the remembrãce of his fauor, which he may assure himselfe to be greater riches, than all the Golde of Ophyr which is in India, or the Siluer which Salomon had from the Kings of Arabia.

1.Kin.9.28.
2.Chron.9.14.

The



E are not to pretermit in this matter an examination of the latter parte of that notable protestation of the prophet Dauid cited the last day out of the thirtie and seuē Psalme, where for the consolation of the poore, iust, and righteouse man hee professeth that as hee had neuer seene himselfe forsaken of the Lorde, so also hee had neuer seene his seede left so barely, or driuen to such extremities, as that they were forced to begge their breade: a thing, which the poore man is with some diligence to consider as making for the better ingendring of his contentation and comfort: for whereas the increase of the poore mans miserie consisteth many times in the view of his wife, and children, whose minde by reason of them is so much the more oppressed with care, by how much the lesse he seeth any ordinary meanes to leaue them after his death in any good or reasonable state, it cannot bee, but that when hee shall finde out a remedie for this speciall griefe hee shall with great alacritie

applie

applie himselfe to the conceiuing of this ioy, whereof he is here by the Apostle Iames remembred. This salue or remedy, the prophet Dauid will quickely giue him, for he speaketh to the cõscience of the poore man, where the wound or sore lyeth, protesting in the worde of a prophet, and man of God, that the seede of the righteouse man was neuer seene by him begging bread. Which wordes are not so to bee taken, as though the issue of the righteouse man, should be alwayes lefte in such sufficient case in respect of outward things as that they should neuer want any thing seruing for supplying of corporall wants, but the sense of the wordes is, that the afflictions of this life, and the vse of the Lords trials is not alwayes permanent, nor continually remayning in the seede and posteritie, of a righteouse man, but that all the corrections of the Lorde vsed towards them are momentany and for a time, and indure not alwayes: so that although himselfe doth dye, and be vntimely taken away from his children, yet the Lorde who prouided for him in the time of his life wilbe carefull for his posteritie after his death, so that they shall inioy his good blessings, and bee preserued for euermore. Whereas Psal 37.28.

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on the contrary the seede of the wicked mu
versu eodē. shalbe cut off. His children shalbe vagabonds, and begge their bread, comming out
Psal.109.10. of their destroyed places: his posteritie shalbe consumed, and in the generation following his name shalbe put out: yea, iniquitie of such childrens fathers shalbe had in continuall remembrance with the Lord, so that according to the tenor, & course of the three contayned in the lawe, the ielousie, and fire of the Lordes wrath shalbe kindled so hot, and shall burne so furiously, and so continually against them that their iniquities
Exod.20.5. shabe visited vpon the children, vpon the third, and fourth generation, of them that hate him: but on the contrary the beames of his mercie, and the sunne shine of his fauour shal stretch, & be extended vnto thousands to them that loue him, and keepe his commaundements. The performance of which gracious promise, if there be any that stand doubtfull of, and therefore seeme to distrust the former profession of the prophet Dauid, because they see that the offspring of many good and righteous men doe not inioy the same promised blessing, but are oftentimes left very simplye, and driuen to many inconueniences, insomuch that without the helpe

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and releefe of others, they might not onely begge but famish and perishe, and come to a lamentable ende, they that pause vpon this matter, and suspend their iudgment, as not crediting the truth of the promise, nor the report of Dauid, are first to consider, that it is a part of the performance of the same promise, that it pleaseth God by his speciall prouidence to moue the hearts of good men to shew compassion vpō the desolate and fatherlesse children of a righteouse man, to be taken vp of them, and preserued by them from the common miseries and mishappes of the worlde, whereas on the contrary the same prophet hath constantly affirmed, that for a full punishment of the sinnes of the wicked, it shall so come to passe after them that there shalbe none to extend mercie vnto them, neither any to shewe pittie vpon his fatherlesse children. Againe they are in this matter to carry a good eye, and sound iudgment, and to compare scripture with scripture, and to consider what the Lord speaketh to this purpose by his prophet Ezekiel, wher hee makes this promise conditionall. If a sonne shall see the sins of his father, & feare, and not doe the like, &c. he shal not dye in the iniquitie of his father, but hee shall surely

Psal.109.12.

Ezek.18.14. 11.16.

liue:

liue: but if the son be cruel, a shedder of bloo, an adulterer, an oppressor, an vsurer, ý hath takē interest, if he doth these things, saith the Lord, shal he liue? he shal not liue: seeing he hath done all these abominations he shal die the death, and his blood shalbe vpon him: so ye see how this matter standeth. You must needs confesse, ý seeing God doth not afflict nor punish any man iniuriously or vniustly, therfore the affliction, and miserie which the posteritie of a righteouse man are somtimes subiect vnto, proceede not from any rigor, or too much seueritie in God, but from the desart of their owne actuall, and personall sinnes, God is not so cruell or preposterous in his iustice as to punish one man for the sinne of another: ye shall vse this prouerbe no more sayth the Lord, the fathers haue eten sowre grapes, & the children teeth are set on edge, but the soule that sinneth that soule shall dye: and therefore the sense of the law in Exodus is this: God will visite the iniquitie of fathers vpon their childrē: true, if they hate him, if they proceede, and perseuer in the sins of their fathers: otherwise if they forsake their fathers sins, they shal not feele their fathers plagues. And againe. God wil shew mercie vnto thousands: true, to thē that

Verse 10.11. 12.13.

Verse 1.4.

that loue him, that keep his cõmandements, that do continue and goe forward in their fathers obediẽce & holines: but if they break of ẏ course, & practise of their fathers vertue, they shal cut thẽselues of frõ the tast of their fathers blessings: so ẏ although amongst vs many times it comes to passe, ẏ the children of a good mã, of a zealous protestãt, of a christian vnspotted in his life, are destitute of releif, & left to thẽselues, & run into mischeifs, they prosper not, they play the vnthrifts, they spend all, they continue not ẏ name, & honest roome, and reporte which their fathers had, we are not to thinke ẏ there is any fault in ẏ promise of God or defecte in his prouidence but rather we are to assure our selues, that ẏ apostacie of ẏ children from ẏ steps of their good father hath pluckt vpon them that iust plague which their sins haue deserued, & so are the authors of their own destruction. A third regard there is also to be had in this matter, and ẏ cõsisteth in ẏ ignorãce, & vnsufficiẽcie of our iudgmẽts, for we many times are deceiued in our opiniõs, taking ẏ mã for iust & righteous which is not so in deed: so ẏ by reason of ẏ want of perfect knowledg in this case, we are caried away wõ ẏ main current of false sentences, & wõ doubt & distrust in

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the promise of God. Therefore wee are to set a watch before our heartes, and to keepe the doore of our lippes taking heede howe, and what we doe thinke and pronounce concerning the seede and posteritie of men, and the state of their fathers: for many a man haue been taken for honest, zealous, well disposed, a good Gospeller, & a man vpright in his actions who neuertheless hath played the hypocrite in all these things, and carried a visor before his face to blinde the eyes, and to abuse the iudgments of the world: so that it is no marueile, that wheras we tooke him for a man of great integritie and godlines, being in our opinions deceiued, his issue and generation after him tracing in the same steppes of hypocrisie and iniquitie with their fathers, are visited with the sharpe rod of the Lordes indignation, growing into necessitie, impotencie, beggery, and such like miseries, the fruites and reapings of their owne dissolute sowing. Ye see then how the wordes of the prophet Dauid are to be taken & how the poore man is therhence to collect, and applie to his sicke conscience, his salue of comfort. Let him content himselfe with his lowe degree: let him serue the Lorde in purenesse of spirite, let him relye in al things

vpon

vpon his good prouidence and according to his habilitie prouide for the good education of his children, and then let him commit himselfe to the Lorde, and commend his children to his protection: hee giueth to beastes their foode, and to the young Rauens their sustenance. The fowles of the heauen that sowe not, reape not, and carry not into any barnes are fedde by your heauenly father. The Lillies of the fielde doe spring, and are clothed in such sort, that Salomon in all his glorie was not arayed like one of them, how much more will he cloth, and feede you, your wiues, your children, your familie, your posteritie for euer, if yee bee not like Gentiles without faith, but like good Christians without immoderate thought, not as those whose whole delight is seated and planted, in Mammon which is riches, and made so drunken with the pleasures of sinne, that God and all godlinesse is quite forgotten, and out of minde, but as those that first of al seeke his kingdome and the righteousnesse thereof, to whome there is this sweet and singuler promise made, by him in whose mouth there was neuer found guile, that all other necessaries whatsoeuer belonging to the preseruation, of our bodies, and natures shalbe

Psal.147.9.

Mat.6.26.

Verse.33.

by him sufficiently prouided, and ministred abundantly for our vse, and comfort. It will not be amisse in this matter for the benefite of the poore man, & his better inducement to contentation and ioy, to goe a little farther, and to consider how much his estate is commended in the course of the scripture, and preferred before the state of the riche man. For I assure you for any thing that I can read to the contrary, that the qualitie of a low degree being in many places cõpared with the condition of a rich man, the first by reason of some speciall aduantages which it carieth, receiueth most cõmonly the worthier place, and better commendation then the other. I will not stand vpon this point, that it pleased the sonne of God Christ himselfe, to make choyse of a poore estate vpon earth, rather then of a riche, and of an estate so poore, as that by his own confession, the Foxes had holes, and the birdes of the heauen had nests, but he himself had not whereon to rest his head, so that in his person wee may see and finde the condition of pouertie sanctified vnto vs, and not in him onely but in his Apostles also, who left and forsooke al that they had, and followed him, insomuch that Peters particuler song to the creeple, might haue beene songe of all of them, sil-

Mat 8.20.
2.Cor.8.9.

Acts.3.6.

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ter, and golde haue I none, the obseruation of which point might serue somewhat to the matter, but I will leaue examples, which doe rather beautifie then prooue, and record that which is expressed, as taught, & commaunded by Christ, seruing very fitly to the purpose, in a place of Mathew, where he directing a certayne young man a course to grow to a perfection in the commandemēts wished him to goe and make sale of all that he had, and giue it to the poore, and to come & folow him. By which words we may gather how the state of pouertie was commended by Christ vnto him, as a better trade, & conditiō of life thē ý possession of great lāds, which then he retayned. I will not say that this is a thing necessarily belonging to our time, and that the precept or counsell there giuen by Christ to the yong man is general, as binding vs & others now to the prescription thereof, as thoughe, that without the sale of our goods and the vndertaking of a voluntary pouertie, noe mā might performe ý measure of feare & seruice which God requireth, for so say our aduersaries, but I know ý the same direction was speciall for ý time, & personal for ý yong mā whose inward disease Christ searched, & touched by ý sharpnes thereof, cōtaining a rule or pattern of per-

Mat. 19. 21.

Canisius Catechis. situal. de consil. fol. 336.

fect loue, which he was to looke into, and to frame himself accordingly, who before bragging of that sufficiencie and full obedience which was not in him, had lyed egregiously to Christ, in affirming that he had kept al the commaundements of the second table from his youth and lackt nothing, whereof hee was immediately in the presence of Christ at that time conuicted, being so farre from the practise of any such perfect and absolute loue, as that vpon the speech of Christ, he departed heauie and sorowfull, because he had great possessions: whereby he apparantly bewraied, how many leagues he was of frõ a consummate obedience, in that he preferred his couetouse affection, before the loue that he falsely pretended to carry towardes his neighbour. But although the same direction reached for that time to him onely and perticulerly, yet I doubt not but the same may serue now as a peculier rule, for such a one as shalbe founde culpable in the same fault, and offend in the same error with him. But suppose not, yet my collection is probable, that the two seuerall conditions of pouertie, and riches being there sette one against another in that young man, the first in regarde of the profite of the man, is preferred

ferred before the latter : for otherwise to what ende serueth that same consequent iudgment of Christ vpon the sight of that young mans behauiour, pronounced to his disciples, and that with an asseueration. Verely I say vnto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdome of heauen, and the Euangelist Marke reporteth the speech to haue beene deliuered in maner of admiration, how hardly doe they that haue riches enter into the kingdome of God: meaning that the very possessing of riches is such a pulbacke or rather plague vnto a man, as that it keepeth him from such good actions, and Christian courses, which otherwise not being in that sorte burdened, hee might cheerefully performe and prosecute with delight, for the discharge of those seuerall duties, whereunto he is bound by the word and lawe of God. And yet this is not al that is there vttered by Christ to the purpose, but hee proceedeth further and affirmeth the matter not onely hard but impossible also that a riche man shoulde bee saued: insomuch that the passage for a Camel through the eye of a nedle is easier and more possible, then the entrance of a riche man into the kingdome of God. A harde

Marke.10. 23.

speech I confesse, and yet the speech of him whose truth & knowledge may not be called in question, being himself the very truth, but ye may say to me, as the disciples said then vnto Christ, being exceedingly amazed at the wordes, who can then bee saued? I answere, such as are not in mind proportionable, nor in qualitie like to that poore man, from whom the occasion of this speech grew and was taken, for I acknowledge that riches it selfe considered simplie, are the good creatures of God, and in their nature they are not euill, but commodious, and profitable diuers wayes: but in that place Christ indeede speaketh of such rich men, as in their wealth are idolaters, for which things sake the wrath of God commeth vpon the children of disobedience: such as incline their hearts not to the testimonies of God but to couetousnesse, making their gold their very God, not by professiõ, but by a kind of cursed confidence planted therin. And the truth of this appproueth by the former place of Marke, where it is euident that Christ speaketh of such as put their trust in their riches, the very same wordes being there expressly vsed. So that not riches but coueteousnesse is heere condemned as the thing that produceth

Col. 3. 5. 6.

Psal. 119. 36.

Marke 10. 24.

teth an impossibilitie for an entrance to salu-
ation, and as it were a barre and obstruction that keepeth fast the doore opening a passage to the kingdome of God. Notwithstanding ye see, how that Christ in that place of Mathew although hee taxeth onely that grosse sinne which dependeth vpon riches, yet he pronounceth the difficultie or impossibilitie against the riche man without any speciall limitation: because indeed we are so peruerse in hearte, and in nature so corrupt, as ý without an extraordinary grace, and gouernment, it is impossible that we should not presume of our wealth, and ware proud thereof, and forget God and so runne into those mischeifs, in ý whirlepoole wherof the cõmon sort of rich men are miserably plunged. For we see what the vniuersall case almost of all our riche men is, hauing their thoughts estrainged from God, and all loue of godlinesse banished frõ their hearts: being set out in colours in the person of that rich man, the parable of whom is knowen of al his kinsmen, but his sin is auoyded of few of thẽ: who vpõ ý large increase of his fruits: Luke.12.16.
and the plenteouse blessing of his grounds, did not vispose himself to returne the duty of thãkfulnes to god for ý same, but applied his

heart to the delight, and pleasure thereof, being occupied with care for the amplifying of his barnes, & the gathering of his goods, and the procuring of the ease of his soule, to eate and drinke, and take pastime not considering in whose hands and power that soule of his rested, who for the abuse of his plentiousnes, & prophane securitie pluckt the same from him, when he thought himself far from any such plague or perill. This is the exacte image and mirror of the most rich men of our time, who being deprived of all spirituall, and Christian sense, and wholy possessed with a spirit of carnall greedinesse, seeke onely the things of the world, coueting to be
Verse 21. rich in themselues, but not in God, vsing all vnlawfull practises, and vngodly pollicies, to hale, and pull corruptible pelfe into their hãds, wherby they bewray themselues to be
Esay 56.11. no better then greedie dogs, as the prophet speakes, which thinke that they haue neuer enough. And from this filthy fountayne, springs the foule streames of their irreligious liues, their proud cõceits, their voluptuous desires, their prophane epicurisme, their brutish forgetfulnesse of God, his honor, his word, & their own duties euery way. Let vs looke for exãple vpõ the state perticulerly of

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our own countrey & take a view of the ordinary course of life in those who amõgst vs sit in ỳ highest roomes, & by reason of their welth, beare the stroke in gouernment, and other matters, where shal we find more Atheisme, barbarousnesse, confusion, loosenesse, outrage, sacrilege, and what you will else then among them? For their owne parte they thinke that they maye sinne by authoritie being as men not subiect to the checkes or controlements of any, their lykings bee lawes, and their wils reasons: and as they themselues liue without lawe, so doe their families without order: their houses being not lodgings for Christians, but harbours for Sauages: not exercised with anie one point of good discipline, or pietie: but suffered to stande as monuments of misrule, and spectacles of all kinde of lewdnesse: their children fed, but not taught: their seruants and retinue, as farre from the feare of God, and the fruites thereof, yea from humane ciuilitie, as they are neere to the contempt of God, the irreuerence of his worde, and the dishonour of his name by their common swearings, and blasphemies. And I woulde to God that this were the fault onely of the Libertines of our age, who carrie no note

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at all, nor marke in the matter of zeale and sincerite, but this abuse, & ouersight (which may iustly prouoke teares,) is crept within the doores and rookes of such as make greate shew of religion, & are reputed of the number of the best Professors, and fauourers, whose houses are not in such sort purged & reformed from these cõmon corruptions, as in soule I wish, & thẽselues in conscience are bound vnto. ¶ Which thing I take to be most requisite for their consideratiõ, & most worthy of their christiã attendance & carefulnes, ý so al stumbling blocks of offence, & occasions of slander to our common cause may bee remoued, wherby ý enemy that speaketh euill of vs as of euil doers, may by our good works which he shal see, glorify God in ý day of visitation, so that I hope you now conceiue by the premises, the sul sense & reason of the former allegation or speech of Christ, pronoucing the impossibility of entrance into the kingdome of God against the rich man, standing in the difficultie of applying himselfe, by occasion of his wealth, to the practise of good things: and in the impediments which doe accompanie the possession of riches, withholding a man from the free course of christian duties, & obedience, which otherwise he might in good

1.Pet.2.12.

mea-

measure yeelde himselfe vnto, the experience whereof is very large, and plentiful amongst vs, forasmuch as wee finde not one riche man almost amongest a hundred wel giuen, religious, zealous, a louer of the trueth, a regarder of his soule, and saluation, more then of his luste and pleasure, but from the least of them to the greatest, with Iere. 6. 13.
one minde and consent they drawe after couetousneesse, following the way of Caine, & cast away by the deceite of Baalams wages: Iude 11.
so that wee may runne to and fro by our streetes, as by the streetes of Ierusalem, in Iere. 5. 1. 5.
the dayes of Ieremie, and seeke and enquire in our open places if there bee any one man amongst our great mē, that executeth iudgement, and seeketh the trueth, but wee shall not finde him: they haue altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bondes, and haue not knowen the iudgement of the Lorde, so that in this case I cannot resemble our time better, then to the time wherein Christ liued, wherein the mysteries of the kingdome of God, were hid from the wise & prudent, and mēn of vnderstanding, and Mat. 11. 25.
were opened to the simple yea vnto babes, and wherein the great men, the princes, the Scribes, and the Pharisees, and the richer

sort

sorte despised Christ, and counted the preachinge foolishnes but the poore by his owne testimonie, and triall receiued the Gospel, & were not offended in him. I will not here (although good occasion is offered) enter into a rehearsall of the common speeches of our great worldlings, and Atheistes, who swelling with pride, and almost renting asunder with disdaine and rancour, because of the libertie of the Gospel, and the passage of the word (maugre their hearts & beards,) doe breake out into that same wicked answere of the Pharisees to their officers, concerning Christ: who beeing amazed at the grace of his woordes, and stricken in their heartes with the efficacie of his doctrines, were so farre from doing violence vnto him, as the high Priests had commaunded them, as that contrariwise they bare witnes of his power, and confessed the excellencie of his sayings, affirming, that neuer man spake as he did. But what said the Pharisees: are yee also deceiued:, doe anie of the rulers or of the Pharisees beleeue in him:, but this people that knowe not the lawe are cursed: these are the very formall words of the loose liuers of this time, who of purpose to disgrace as much as they can the Preachers of the

Mat.11.5.

Ioh.7.46.47

the worde, and to diminishe the glory of the Gospel if they coulde, doe vsually make comparisons betwixt the base condition of such as are louers of the trueth, and diligent hearers of the worde preached, and the high degree of those that make a mocke of Christ, and apply themselues to the persecuting of him in his saintes and members: looke (say they) what a sort of beggerly, and poore fellowes doe follow him, such as haue scarce a peece of siluer in their purses, or of bread in their houses, they are his disciples, and are become great holy folkes, and will shortly proue Preachers, and proceed Doctors. but who of vs doe fancie him? doe not wee that bee Gentlemen, rich men, rulers, and magistrates speake euill of the man: doe not wee report the worst we can of him, among our selues, and to strangers?, doe not wee contemne his pulpit talke, make a iest of his threatnings, and preferre accusations, articles, and billes of enditements against him? there are none of vs that doe loue him, and therefore both hee, and they that heare him are deceiued and accursed. Thus the Pharisees of our time deale with vs, and shewe themselues as it weere in print, to bee such maner of men as were the Iewes, whose

hearts

Act.7.54. hearts vpon the hearing of Stephens words brast for anger, and whose teeth gnashed vpon him: and such also, as were the Priests, and captayne of the Temple, and Sadducees in Ierusalem, who being not able to containe themselues, by reason of the malicious spirite wherewith they were possessed because that Peter and Iohn did suche, and
Act.4.1.2. suche thinges in their ministerie, they came vppon them and tooke it grieuously, that they taught the people, and preached in the name of Iesus the resurrection from the dead, but they are condemned by their owne mouthes as euill seruauntes, disclayming from the loue, and knowledge of that thing, and of those men, who ought to bee their ioye, and pleasure, and would
2.Cor.2.16. bee a sauour of life vnto life in them, if they were ordayned to saluation. Wee confesse that in erternall braueries, and in the glorie of flesche, and pompe of the worlde they exceede and goe beyonde vs, but this is not a thing that maye breede a iust offence in anie of vs, forasmuche as the cause of fayth and religion, doeth not hang vppon the sleeues, and authoritye of men, neither doth consist in multitude nor in the degrees of persons, but the same is

to

to be iudged by the eternal and immutable
worde of God, which is the word of trueth, Colossi.1.5.
of life, of saluation, of reconciliation of ye spi-
rite, the onely rule & direction of the faithful:
so that although the heathen do rage, and the
people murmure, the kings of the earth band
themselues, and the princes do assemble to-
gether, yet all this may bee against the
Lorde, and against his Christ, with purpose
to cast off the yoke of his seruice, and to Psal.2.3.
breake the band of their obedience, for mul-
titude is no priuiledge for trueth, neither
is gentilitie, any warrant for godlines. The
true wisedome of God, which is the Gospel
was not known of any of the Princes of the
worlde, for had they knowen it, they would 1.Cor.2.7.8
not haue crucified the Lorde of glorie.
And therefore albeit in number we be few,
in estate poore, and in byrth not Gentle-
men, yet in the knowledge of God wee may
be noble, in faith riche, and in the sight of Iames 2.5.
God as precious as the honorable. Yea, in
this matter the case doth so stande, that for
the most parte those thinges, which to the
eyes of the worlde seeme most excellent, and
by the iudgement of man are commen-
ded, and preferred, are notwithstanding ab-
horred of the Lorde, whose eyes beholde,

not

not the face and legges, but doth pearce into the reynes: and so likewise on the contrary, those thinges which in the opinion of men are vile and of no estimation, are neuertheleſſe in high account before God. For hee
1.Sam.16.7. seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but hee beholdeth the heart, so saide the Lorde himselfe to Samuel, being deceiued in the faire complexion and high stature of Eliab, the eldest sonne of Iſhaie. It is a notable sentence of Salomon in his Prouerbes to this purpose, Bet-
Prou.28.6. ter is the poore that walketh in his vprightneſſe, then hee that peruerteth his wayes though he be riche, and againe, a poore man is better then a lyer, meaning that although a man be destitute of riches, and yet doeth poſſeſſe, and practise vertue, he is to be esteemed aboue that man, which hauing much wealth, yet stands voide of all honestie, so that if there were nothing else but this onely good thing following the estate of the poore man, yet it might bee a sufficient motiue, to prouoke him to the ioye, and reioycing which Iames doeth here set before him, because the feare of God, and obedience to his trueth doeth not consist in golde, and siluer, in many poſſeſſions & noble progenies,

but

but in a regenerated spirite, and in a heart purified by faith. Which spirite & heart, seeing hee may plentifully be adorned with, although in the externall things of the world, hee bee not so full as others, there is no reason that he should passe his time with teares, and separate all comfort from his heart, the blessed Apostle affirming for his consolation, that the kingdome of God is not meate nor drinke, nor any such outward things, but righteousnes, and peace, and ioy in the holie Ghost: and forasmuch also as by the simplenesse of his condition, and the absence of riches, being the very chaynes and fetters of the minde, he may more quietly apply himselfe to the seruice of God, and runne the course of righteousnesse, tending to the gate of Gods kingdome more promptly then the rich man, who by reason of the loade of his wealth, is so pressed with care, and prisoned with carnall cogitations, as that hee hardely can dispose himselfe accordingly, therefore the man is the sooner, and the better to content himselfe with his poore, but profitable state, and not either by griefe to torment himselfe, or by a hungry humor to coueet that thing, which may bring with it more trouble then quietnes, and more disad-

Rom.14.17.

uantage then commoditie if he make price of the sweet freedome of his conscience. A very reuerend, and learned Diuine of this latter age, disputing of purpose concerning this matter, setteth downe briefly diuers speciall thinges wherein the state of the poore man, is more happie and fortunate then the condition of the riche, which although at the first blushe it maye seeme to bee somewhat straunge, because wee see how euerie man contendeth to auoyde and flee from the doore of pouertie, as from a Scorpion, and is as vnwilling to come neere it, as a marriner is loth to approche a rocke in the sea for feare of shipwracke, yet vppon a sober and prudent balancing of the differences, it wil appeare howe probable, and reasonable the matter is, and that howesoeuer men doe followe their naturall and greedie appetites in coueting to bee riche, yet when they haue done all that they can in that respect, they must saye with Salomon, that it is but vanitie, and vexation of the spirite, and iumpe in iudgement with this diuine, to preferre the poore mans vnhappinesse before their owne blisse. For yee shall see. The poore man is not so muche intangled

Muscul. in Math. cap. 21. fol. 490.

Eccl. 2. 11.

with

with the cares of the worlde, and deceitefulnesse of riches, as the other is, which are expressely called thornes by Christ, because in many they do suffocate or choake the good seede of the worde, and makes them altogether vnfruitefull: the rich man hee is in mynde troubled, in bodie businessed, in his thoughtes distracted, hee hath so manie farmes to visite, so manie yoke of Oxen to looke vnto, so manie bargaynes to make, so muche money to paye, and to receyue, and so many thinges to doe, as that hee can spare no time to regarde the state of his soule, nor spende an houre to prouide his spirituall wealth, and welfare, by the hearing of the woorde of GOD, the meanes of his saluation preached, and if he doe by chance come to a sermon at any time, it were as good, or rather better hee were absent: for although his bodie bee in the Churche, yet his wits run vppon his businesse, and his senses are occupied about other matters, the voyce of the Preacher is as an vnperfect sounde to his eares: hee receiueth the beginning of a sentence, but attendes not the latter end: he heares the latter end, but hath forgotten the beginning, and so it comes to passe, that as Mat.13.22.

he came to the temple with little deuotion, so he returnes home with little profite, but the poore man is at libertie in respect of these thinges, his minde is not in such sorte forestalled, nor his wits with such cares troubled, but with a free minde, and conscience prepared with the feare of God, he doeth apply himselfe to his seruice, desiring to increase in knowledge and in all good things, holding nothing so precious, as the discharge of his duetie in that case, the glorie of God, and the Christian care of his owne saluation.

Againe, the riche man is Cousine germane to Diues the glutton, who as hee was full in his purse, so he would needes bee delicious in his fare: his wealth and his diet must bee correspondent, he must eate and drinke of the best, his table must bee furnished with all the delicate meates, and drinks that may be gotten for money, making his bellie his God, and planting a felicitie in the varietie of meates, and drinks, and multitude of dishes. And heerehence growe the inconueniences and mischiefes of surfeting, drunkennesse, wantonnes, concupiscences, and idlenesse the mother of all wickednesse, for the bellie being full, the bones looke for

Luke 16.19.

rest

rest, and not of this onelie, but of the diseases of the bodie also, as the Goute, and dropsie, with others of the like nature, the fruits of superfluous, and immoderate feeding. But nowe the poore man as hee cannot by reason of his wantes, so he doth not acquaint himselfe with such a gluttonous kind of life: he contentes his nature with a little, and therefore hath his body sound, his mind vncorrupt, his limmes strong for labour, his legges proportionable, and by reason of his good course, liueth long, and dieth in a good age, which is the blessing of God, whereas the gorged riche man doeth by his intemperance abbreuiate the continuance of his own life, and so committes a greate sinne in the breach of the sixt commaundement of the lawe. Exod.20.13

Further, the poore man by reason of his daylie labour, and ordinarie trauell in his vocation, doth so weaken the forces & powers of his bodie for the time, as that in the euening, and houre of rest, he refresheth himselfe with great pleasure, hauing that sweet comfort of nature which is sleepe, as it were at his commandement: whereby he is so sufficiently reuiued, that in the morning he returneth againe to his common busines, fresh.

lustie, ioyfull, and fit for his worke, whereas the riche man is in this point like to Ahasuerosh the king of Persia, of whom we read in the booke of Hester, who could not sleepe in the night, and therefore called for the booke of the Records, or Chronicles of the lande, that by perusing of them, hee might driue out the time of the night: our riche men consider not that it pleaseth GOD manye times for a punishment to them to withholde his benefite of natural sleepe from their eyes, the same being a speciall gifte of his, for the preseruation of our nature, which otherwise without the same could not possibly indure. The first man Adam couldc not sleepe of himselfe vntill the Lord caused it to fall vpon him, as shewing thereby that it is in his hands either to giue it or not to giue it, to send it or to withdraw it as pleaseth him. And therefore in the vse of his iustice, he doth many times deprive the riche mē of this comfort, suffering them to lye tossing, & tumbling vpon their beds, desiring this ordinary refreshing, but cannot haue it, and I my selfe haue heard many of them complayning of the want thereof, that they passe many nightes, with little or no sleepe at al, taking the same to come by some happe

Hest.6.1.

Gen.2.21.

happe or fortune, by the length of the night, or some stirre and noyce, not considering the iustice of God afflicting them in that sorte with vnrest in the night, to put them in remembrãce of ý ill spending of the day, which thing being regarded of Salomon, made him to affirme, that the sleepe of him that trauaileth is sweete, whether hee eate little or muche, but the satietie of the riche will not suffer him to sleepe, and againe, the hearte of suche a man taketh no rest in the night. Eccl.5.11. Ib.2.23.

Moreouer, the poore man, by reason of the perpetuall necessities of his life, is so well accustomed with common afflictions, as hunger, losse, displeasure, iniuries, want of money and suche like thinges, as that it is no trouble nor disquietnesse vnto him, when he is in any such sort pinched, because his youth, and age, and all the dayes of his life hath beene nothing els but as it were a schoole of discipline, and furnace of tryall to him, and therefore whatsoeuer crosse happeneth, hee doeth endure it with patience, and vndergoe it with contentation, beyng well pleased with his lot, but the rich man ý hath bin acquainted with no such crosses, hauing liued in ease, wealth,

friendshippe, prosperitie, quietnesse, pleasure and delight, and therefore not knowing what affliction meaneth, when he by the hand of God is neuer so little touched, whether it be with an iniurie, enemies, hunger, losse of children, landes, or wealth he is by & by carried away beyonde the limites of all reasonable patience, he fretteth, and fumeth and taketh on like a madde man, yea, sometimes fometh out blasphemies against God, and complaineth of the harde dealing of God towardes him, as though God were bound by the receite of some benefite of his, to extend alwayes the partes of loue & curtesie for shew of thankfulnesse: and so thinking that God shoulde still let him liue in such a flourishing state, as somtimes he did, when he feeles but a smal alteration, though it be but a gentle admonition, he takes it in no good part, he growes outragious, & will not be perswaded to any moderatiõ of mind: so that it is impossible that the singuler vertue of patience should possesse his soule: but the poore man is prepared for euery occasion, come what affliction or aduersitie will come it is no newes to him, seeing the whole course of his life, hath been a practise of bearing and suffering.

Lastly,

Lastly the poore man hauing liued in his simple estate with a good conscience caried in all his actions, when the time commeth that hee must pay his due to nature, and goe the way of all flesh, death which is common to al, is welcome to him: hee hath no great wil or testament to make, no goods gotē by vsury, and oppression to restore, no masse of money to leaue behinde him, no store of treasure to breede in him a hatred of death, but knowing that the same is his port of rest, and conclusion of all sorowes, he receiues it quietly ioyfully, and Christianly. But oh what a terror to the mind of the riche man is the consideration of death, howe many greeuous sinnes hath he marching before him, which makes him to abhorre the ende of his life: the respect of his former felicitie in this world, his wife, his wealth, his place, his cofers, his lands, his houses, his seruants, euery of these perticulers ministers athousand occasions of desiring life to his heart, and as he lyeth loath to dye, so hee knowes not howe to prepare himselfe for the same, but many times it comes so to passe, ý the man ý hath passed all his life in sinne, and securitie, and vanitie without a discharge of a good conscience towards God and the worlde, is by the

iustice

iustice of God so farre from repentance, and a Christian ende, as that what with carnall cares, and hope of longer continuance, and other things of the like qualitie, wherof Satan at that time will powre in plentie, and sufficient number into his head and braines, he shall haue no remembrance of making an attonement betwixt God, and his soule, but shall die desperately without hope of mercie, and impenitently without remorse for his sinne: this point of difference in the departure of the rich and poore man is notably touched by the sonne of Sirach, who in one verse cryeth out, O death how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liueth at rest in his possessions, vnto the man that hath nothing to vexe him, & that hath prosperitie in all things. But in ỳ next verse he proclaymeth, O death how acceptable is thy iudgment to the needy vnto him whose strength fayleth, and is vexed with all thinges, &c. Whereby is prooued, that good resolution concerning death that the poore man carieth, being glad when the ende of his miseries approcheth: but contrariwise ỳ horror, and feare of death, which possesseth the mind of the rich man, who can in no case abide to heare speech of the same, being the thing that amongst all things else hee least brooketh,

Ecclus. 41. 1. 2.

keth, & most abhorreth. Now all these things being considered I referre the iudgment to your selues, which of these two is the happier man: the rich with so many inconueniences attending his person, or the poore with so many aduantages accompanying his estate, and whē ye haue past your verdit, then apply it to the present wordes of Iames for the strengthning of his direction of ioy to the poore man: for I doubte not but that the dililigent obseruation of these differences, as it cannot but breed in the riche man a kinde of disliking of himselfe, and his condition, so it cannot but ingender in ẏ poore mā an allowance, & approbatiō of his pouertie, & so cause him ẏ more willingly to practise ioy & contentation in the manifolde distresses of this life. But now by ẏ way if for your satisfaction you aske me this necessary question, what maner of poore men I speak of al this while, because ẏ matter is sōewhat doubtful, in ẏ there are diuers persons, going vnder ẏ name & title of ẏ poore, who by reasō of their lewd, & wicked course of life deserue no iot of these good speeches, but rather ẏ whip & correction, & al maner of disgrace, being such as are vnworthy in any good place to be remēbred or spoken of: I wil shortly resolue you, ẏ

by

that by the poore man I doe not vnderstand the idle begger, and rogish companion, who not applying himselfe to any ordinary labour, makes a profession of beggery, and liues altogether vpon the spoyle: such both by the lawe of God, and the commendable lawes of this realme prouided in that behalfe, are to be punished according to the measure of their idlenesse, and qualitie of vagabond liuing: neither doe I meane by the poore man such maner of persons, as are common haunters of alehouses, vnthriftes, spendals, and drunkards, hauing scarce either pennie in their purses or coate to their shoulders, and yet all the weeke long lye at such tipling places, hauing no regard for a ciuill behauiour, nor desire to purchase an honest & good report amongst men. Which special thing I could wish by some seuere order might be reformed in this place, wherin there are many offendors in this case, the negligent consideration whereof is occasion of many riots and breaches of the lawe in many poynts (and of much sinne also) but by the poore man I meane such a one as in scripture by the spirit of God is commended vnto vs, and committed to our regarde, the man vpon whom it hath pleased God not to

bestow

bestow so great a portion of riches as vpon others for some secrete purpose of his wisedome, being no tall Cedar, no man of great office or authoritie in the common wealth, but an artificer or handicraftes man, labouring diligently in his manuarie trade or science, to releeue himselfe, and maintayne his familie thereby, demeaning himselfe honestly as a christian, and quietly like a subiect in the feare of God, and according to the qualitie of his vocation, such a one in scripture I take to be ment by ý name of a poore man. As for our roges, and vagabonds I exclude them out of the role, and number of poore men, commended by the spirit of God, and spoken of by vs, who because they do not labour, they should not eate, & I could wish for them also, that by the good execution of our lawes, the countrey might be rid of the burden and charge of them, who by the duetie, and diligence of the officers ought to be taken and sent to our bridewelles, and millhouses erected for the purpose, that so by iustice they might bee driuen to that paynes and amendment of life which of themselues they purpose not to practise. Within this compasse of poore men we may include those also, vpon whose shoulders it hath pleased

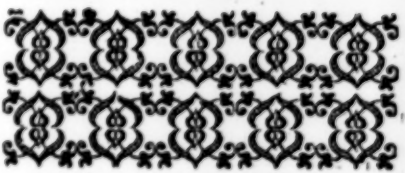
God

God to lay the crosse of pouertie for their triall or punishment: hauing beene sometimes in very sufficient state, and able both to liue of themselues, and to releeue others in necessitie, but now by some casualitie, are decayed, and come behinde hand, and fallen into pouertie, as either by fire, robbing, shipwrack, suretyship or such like occasions, and therefore are compelled to relye vpon a generall charitie, with whom we may in like sort ioyne the poore of our almes houses, the olde, lame, blinde, maymed souldier, and other such impotent persons, to whom there are promises made of farre better states, if for the time they can resolue themselues to beare of their miseries w̃ a shoulder of patience, and to trust to the good prouidence of God expecting a time of helpe and deliuerance from him. And as these men are in diuers places of scripture perswaded to quietnes and contentation, so here by the Apostle Iames they are prouoked to reioycing, to cast off all mourning and complaining, and all partes of impatiencie, to consider the commodities of their lowe degree, to looke vp to the heigth and excellencie of Gods kingdome prepared for them, to acknowledge the mercies of God, to giue him

thankes

thankes without grudging for his visitations, and so to liue, as that by their pouertie, God may accordingly be glorified, and their afflicted bodies, and soules in the ende saued: of which matter ye shall heare more (if God permitte) the next time.

The



Eioyce in that he is exalted, It is nothing straunge that Iames shoulde heere giue counsell to the poore man to reioyce in his pouertie, or rather in his exaltation, although the Lorde by the prophet Ieremie, doth restrayne, and limite al reioycing, and glorying to the knowledge, and vnderstanding of his will: saying, let not the wise man glory in his wisedome, nor the strong man in his strēgth, nor the rich man in his riches ches, but let him that glorieth, glorie in that he vnderstandeth and knoweth me; and our Sauiour would not giue libertie to the Seuentie, to reioyce because the diuels were subdued to them in his name, but rather because their owne names were written in heauen: and the blessed Apostle also woulde not dispose of himself to reioyce in any thing, but in the crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ, as himselfe professeth to the Galatians: which places ouerthrow not the wordes of Iames here, because ỳ scripture is not as a house or kingdome deuided in it selfe, but as God is alwayes one, and he neuer contrary to himselfe

Ier.9.23.24.

Luke10.20.

Galat.6.14.

selfe, for his worde also is one, and that neuer iarres with it selfe. A generall rule for all our ioy is giuen by Paul to the Corinth. 1.Cor.1.31. saying, he that reioyceth let him reioyce in the Lord: which rule if it doth square out, and measure the vse of our mirth, and gladnesse, then whatsoeuer speciall thing it be that we do reioyce in, or of, it can but be lawfull in it selfe, and acceptable to God: for the ioye of the faithfull is not in such sorte eyed vp as it were by the winges, in respect of the receite of the graces of God, but that there is this scope giuen them, that looke howe many good blessings they are made partakers of from God, of so many they may freely, and without sinne be glad, and ioyful, prouided alwayes that the rule be kept, to make God the foundation of their ioye, and in the vse thereof to haue regard of thankfulnesse of the benefite, and the prayse of his name. If we search the scriptures & peruse ye histories of the Church, we shall read of many things from whence the godly in al ages haue taken occasion to reioyce: as of the deliuerance of the faithfull, out of the hands of persecutors, victory against the enemies, returne from captiuitie, the free course of the Gospell, the obedience and constancie of the

brethren, the gouernment of a good prince, ý peace of conscience vpon feeling of ý mercie of God, & many other things, which particulers if they happē to vs, as they haue of old to ý Church of God, we may in like sort, & wout al offēce reioyce in thē as they haue done. So ý hereby all the carnall reioycings of ý wicked arecōdemned, who many times boast of their sin, & triumph in doing euill, making not God, but Sathan whom they serue the foundation of their ioye: for when the children of God are in some distresse, and any way afflicted, then as Tyrus reioyced at the ouerthrow of Ierusalem, saying, a ha the gate of the citie is broken, it is turned vnto mee, for seeing she is desolate I shalbe replenished, so do the wicked Tyrians of al times clap their hands & are well apaid when they see the miseries of the righteous thinking the sight of their calamitie, to be a sufficient cause and reason for their execrable melody. The proofe whereof is great, and large euen amongst vs, seeing it can not be denied, but that there are such scoffing mates, and riming marchants, as were in the dayes of Dauid, who made songs of his trouble, & triumphed in his aduersitie, and said, a ha a ha, our eyes haue seen the man ouerthrowen, so

Ezek.26.2.

Psal.32.15. 16.

these

these persons, when they see neuer so little trouble raised vp against vs, that we are molested, cited, suspended, excommunicated, indighted, inhibited, and in such like sort diuers wayes hãdled, they cry out there, there, so we would haue it, they make feasts one to another in token of ioy, and looke bigge vpon vs, as if they would deuoure vs, yea they deale as the Pharisies sometimes dealt against Christ, who when they heard that Iudas Iscariot woulde betray him into their handes they were glad of it, and promised him money to doe it, so these men reioyce when they can haue any occasion of aduantage by the cãnon law, the iniunctions, or otherwise against vs, and both by perswasiõs, and promises, doe incourage others to work our mischiefe: but they reioyce in their boastings, & al such reioycing is euill. And therfore we know to our comfort, ỳ looke as the Lord brought a most horrible iudgment vpõ Tyrus for triumphing at ỳ fall of Ierusalem, so these men shall not escape the force of the Lords wrath, who being ielous of his honor, cannot abide to see his seruants abused, & his prophets, the apple of his eye made iesting stocks: & as we do admonish thẽ, so we aduise all others, to be carefull in this case of their

Mark. 14. 21.

Iames 4. 16.

Ezek. cap. 26. & 27.

mirthes and triumphes not to reioyce in the wickednes of their handes, and in the sinnes of others, as it is seene nowe a dayes, that there are those, which take a felicitie, and pleasure to make a man by abundance of drinke loose the vse of his senses, laughing at his drunkenes, & reioycing at that, which the soules of gods children do moorne for, & they themselues if there were any feare of God in them should condemne in themselues: but such is the desperatenes of this age by reason of our corruptions, and want of good discipline, that the glory of God lyeth in the dust, the way of God is euill spoken of, and sin and iniquitie hath gotten the vpper hand, and trampleth vpon godlines: but leaving the sorrow and lamentation for the same, and prayer either for the redresse of all things amisse, or for the ende and finishing of all things, to your Christian soules and consciences, I will proceede with the Apostle in the texte, who nowe concludeth with the poore man, and giueth him a sight of his crowne and glory, and cause of ioye, consisting in a future preferment, or promotion in the wordes, in that he is exalted. It is a common vse not onely of the spirit of God in scripture, but of vs amongst our selues

also in the time of a mans trouble to minister comforte vnto him by an argument drawen from the hope of deliuerance, and remedie in the ende. If ye reade the thirtie and one chapter of the prophecie of Ieremie, the whole prophesies of Micha, Nahum, Abacuck, and so to Malachy, the last of the prophets, ye shall haue sufficient proofe, and instance of this matter. And in the newe testament, yee shall light almost vpon no leafe, or page, but yee shall finde comforts of this qualitie. Greate is your rewarde in heauen. It is your fathers pleasure to giue the kingdome. To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Lifte vp your heades for your redemption draweth neere. I will not leaue you fatherlesse, but will come vnto you. There shal not an heare fall frõ the head of any of you: this is the promise that he hath promised vnto vs, euen that eternall life wõ infinite other places of ꝑ like importance: which course is also followed and taken of vs in our consolations to our afflicted friends, because we knowe that there can not bee applied to their consciences, a more speciall matter of comforte, then hope and assurance of helpe, and reliefe at the last. The very same maner of incourage,

Mat.5.12.
Luke 12.32.
Luke 23.43
Luke 21.28.
Iohn 14.18.
Acts.27.34.
1 Iohn.2.25.

ment, and cheering, Iames doth here lay and spread before the eyes of the poore mã wishing him to be contented with his state, to practise patience, yea ioy because the time shall come wherein, although he bee now in greeuous miserie, and lye in the dust, yet he shalbe lifted vp to a supreeme degree and heigth of glorie, and shalbe made partaker of all the honours, and excellencies of the sonnes of God: so that if there bee any brother or sister among vs, punished, and afflicted with any kind of crosse, and calamitie, whether it be pouertie, weakenesse, sicknes, contempt, diffamation, or persecution, or whatsoeuer else the regarde of the present matter, we haue now in hand, may in great measure strengthen their feeble armes and solace their heauie spirites assuring them that the said afflictions, shall not alwayes continue, & indure vpon them, but shall haue not onely an ende but also a recompence of such glorie at the last, as all the miseries of this present time, are in no respect worthy
Rom. 6. 11. of. And least any man should mistrust the truth of his promise, and stagger with doubt of the assurance, it is with diligence to be marked, how of purpose to take away all occasion of such incredulitie, the Apostle doth

here

here vse not the future but the present tense, he doth not say in that he shalbe exalted but in that hee is exalted, as though hee were in present fruition already of the ioyes of that kingdome: the like or rather more effectuall maner of speaking is vsed by Paul to the Romans, where to approue the certaintie of the glorie of the faithfull, hee speaketh after the maner of the Hebrewes, vsing the time past although the benefite be to come, in respect of the time with vs, for he doth not say there, that God wil predestinate, cal, iustifie, and glorifie the faithfull but that hee hath done these things already, and that the glorification of the saints of God, is as it were past & gone, a most elegant course of words, ratifying, and sealing vnto the elect their true and vndoubted blessednes, & there is no question, but that ý children of God now liuing & as yet carying about them this earthly tabernacle, doe notwithstanding in their cõsciences feele as it were ý tast & begining of those exceding ioyes, wherof herafter they shal haue by ý mercie of God reall, & actuall possessiõ. This place doth further shew, what is ý proper course of aspiring to ý excellẽcie, & prehemineẽce of the felicitie of Gods kingdome, & what ý meãs or ladder is to ascẽd or

Rom. 6. 13.

climbe vp by to the gate of perfect glorie: not a dayntie, and delicate life, not a proud, and lordly behauiour, not a quiet state free from all afflictions, and perturbations, but humilitie, lowlines, persecution, killing, the loosing of the life in this world, these are the meanes to steppe vp to the seat, and scepter of true and triumphant happines. The man that is desirous to come to a vayne of golde, hee must digge for it, and discend into the bowels of ye earth, without which discent he shall neuer fulfill his wish. Paul proposeth before the Romans, and by them before vs, the person of Christ for an example in this matter, who being the sonne of God by nature, first suffered, and then was glorified: so that we being the sonnes of God by grace, & adoption, and heires anered with Christ, if we purpose to be made partakers of his glory we must first be pertakers of his crosse, & take that course for our preferment which he did. The regard of which matter may be a singuler cõfort to al ye faithful who by reason of the afflictions of this life are after a forte battered and throwen down in conscience, with some naturall distrust of the glorie to come: whose weake faith is to haue this suppost, ye their trouble and aduersities, are the

Rom.8.17.

very

verie high wayes leading to Gods king-dome, and their miserie as it were the doore, by which they are to enter and passe in, so that the feeling of the extremities of this life, is no cause why they shoulde feare or bee discouraged, but rather is as an indenture, and firme obligation, confirming the assurance of their future comforts, wherof God in his worde hath made them large promises, & therefore as they are hereby to plucke up their spirites, and to comfort their heartes, so on the contrary part those men that receiue their consolations in this life, & cannot abide the smart of the least afflictiõ, but shunning it themselues, doe labour to increase the same in others, and adde to the bonds of the Saintes, and playe the tyrants ouer the poore, flaying them and selling thẽ euen for shoes, and oppressing them with all burdens, they may learne herehence what little cause they haue to reioyce in their lustes, or to take pleasure in these actions, forasmuch as the time shall come, wherein although the poore be made here their footstooles, and bondslaues, they like Popes riding on their shoulders, yet a suddayne change, and great alteration, shall happen, when the poore man shalbe exalted, and lifted

ted vp to the skies, and they shalbe taken by the iustice of God, and hurled into the depth of hell. And that this is true, hearken what the wise man saieth concerning the matter, who speaking of the different endes of the wicked, and righteous man, doeth pronounce that at the iudgement of al flesh, the righteous man shal stande in great boldnesse before the face of suche as haue tormented him, and taken away his labours, but the wicked when they see him shall bee vered with a horrible feare, and shalbe amazed for his wonderfull deliuerance: and then they shall change their minds, and sigh for griefe, and say within themselues. This is he who wee sometimes had in derision, and in a parable of reproche: we fooles thought his life madnesse, and his ende without honour, but how is he now counted among the children of God, and his portion is among the Saintes, & thereupon they shal breake forth into a condemnation against themselues, & say, we haue erred from the way of trueth, & the light of righteousnes hath not shined vnto vs, and the sunne of vnderstanding rose not vpon vs: we haue wearied our selues in the way of wickednes, and destruction, and we haue gone thorow dangerous wayes, but we

Wisd. 5. 1. 2. &c.

haue

haue not knowē the way of the Lord, & further, they shall then though too late growe out of conceite with their former vanities of the world, and pleasures of sinne, which they inioyed for a season, and shall crie out, what hath pride profited vs, or what gayne hath the pompe of riches brought vnto vs, for all these thinges are passed away as a shadow and as a poste that passeth by, &c. Surely if these thinges doe not mooue, and cannot woorke the heartes of our worldlings to another conceit of themselues, and better course of life then nowe they holde, I must needes pronounce they are made not of flesh, but of flint and adamant, which beates backe the blow of the hammer, and will receiue no impression, but I hope ý best of thē: and I doe also pray to God for them, that a new creatiō of heart may be wrought in thē, that they may be touched with a feeling of their own sinne, & sense of the necessities of ý Saintes of God, and may so runne the race of this life, that the crowne of righteousnes stored vp for the faithful, & the high degree of exaltatiō to ý glory of the sonnes of God, spoken of here by Iames, may bee cōmunicated by the mercie of God with them and vs.

For ý helping forward of which matter

in

in their behalfe, I will now trace forwarde in the steppes of the Apostle, and goe on with him to the second part, or member of his cõparison heare made, and instituted: comprehending a special direction for the rich man, teaching and schooling him, as well as the poore man, how he is to behaue himselfe in his good estate, and time of prosperitie, to wit, not to build vpon his wealth, as vpon a rocke or foundation, thinking that there is no qualitie of weakenes, or possibilie of decay therein, but rather to consider the naturall incerteinty, and slipperines thereof, and vppon that consideration, to cast off all his vaine trust, and foolish confidence reposed in the same, and while hee hath his riches in possession so to vse it, and dispose of it, as God in his worde hath prescribed. For suche I take to be the meaning of the Apostle in the woordes, Let the riche man reioyce in that hee is made lowe. That is, let him keepe him selfe within the compasse of his duetie, and thinke that as many times after peace comes warre, and after fayre weather a storme, so a great mutation may happen to and vpon his felicitie, whereby it may come to passe, that although he be nowe riche, yet he may be made poore: although he be now

moun-

mounted aloft,, and risen vp to the toppe of worldly glorie, yet he may be plucke downe againe to the earth, and throwen into the dust of miserie, as many haue bin before him. And therfore he is to carrie in his heart, this poynt of knowledge, and consideration, and therewith to be armed in such sort, as that when this alteration shall come, he may bee prepared for it, and goe out as it were to meete it: saying with Iob to his wife, shall we receiue good things at the hand of God, and not euill also: or otherwise these words may be taken, and that with good probabilitie and sense: to wit, that the rich man although by reason of his sufficiencie & good measure of wealth, he be promoted, and advanced to some high estate, and excellent calling, yet in his opinion he is to beare a lowe sayle, and to carry an humble minde still within him, to bee farre from any arrogant, and proud conceit of himselfe, and although he be high in degree, yet to be low in behauiour, in gesture meeke, and in speeche courteous, which thinges are able to winne the generall loue of men, yea of enemies, & in such sort to apply himselfe to the practise of humilitie in his greatest honour, as that it may be seene that a gentlens of spirite, and

Iob 2.10.

lowli-

lowlines of minde is more regarded of him then the quantitie of his wealth, or the qualitie of his calling: both these constructions being so reasonable, and so agreeable with ye purpose of the Apostle, and the ductie of the rich man, wee will shortly by the grace of God dispatch for your comfort, & edifying. I hope you are not so ignorãt as not to know, nor so frowarde as not to acknowledge the naturall mutabilitie, and vncertaintie that is in this life, and in the possession of riches, to day a king, to morowe without a king-
Reu.18.7.8. dome, to day a Queene, no widdowe, seeyng no mourning, to morow, a fall, death, sorow, famine, and burning with fire. Salomon in his Booke called the Preacher, beeyng written in his latter daies after long experience doeth dwell after a sort vpon this argument, prooving largely and strongly, that there is nothing of staye, and continuance vnder the sunne, for the very generations doe passe and goe away, and all things haue their ende. Who would haue thought reading the beginning of the storie of Iob, where it is said that his substance was seuen
Iob.1.3. thousand sheepe, & three thousand Camels, fiue hundred yoke of oxen, & fiue hundred she Asses, his familie verie great, no man in all

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the East part of the world like vnto him, not one amongest all the Arabians, Chaldeans, Idumeans, and the rest of the nations comparable vnto him for wealth. I saye who would haue thought that notwithstanding all this, hee should by and by reade concerning him, that in one daye hee had his seruauntes slaine, his cattell stollen, his sheepe burnt, his children murdered, all that hee had, spoyled, destroyed, taken away, and nothing left him, yea his very body also made a spectakle of horror, and an image of miserie, beeing smitten with sore byles from the sole of his foote to the crowne of his head, and no part remaining whole about him: It is not almost credible in humane opinion, that so sodayne a change, so miraculous an ouerturne from so good a state to so vyle a case, from so muche wealth to so much woe, could possibly haue happened: but the storie is true, and the accident is nothing impossible, and Iob himselfe confessed, that as he was borne naked, so he should die naked, and that as the Lord had giuen him that wealth, so he had also taken it away from him at his pleasure. But what was Iob, an Indfidell, and a reprobate: No surely, an vpright and a iust man, Iob.1.1.

man, and one that feared God, and eschewed euill, so saith the spirite of God expressly of him, and yet this change from riches to pouertie; and from good to badde fell vpon him, howe much more then are the vngodly sinners, and vnrighteous men of the world subiect to the same. Judgement saith Peter begins at the house of God, if it first begin at vs, what shall the ende bee of them which obey not the Gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saued, where shall the vngodly, and the sinner appeare? Did Job, feele the suddainnesse and the waight of an alteration, and shall those in whose hearte there is no feare towardes God, in whose handes there is no innocencie, and in whose minde there is no desire of any good thing, shall they escape the plague of the same? no no, the Prophet Dauid affirmeth plainely concerning them, that they shalbe consumed as the fat of Lambes, their prosperitie shall passe away, as a clowde, their Bay trees shall not alwaies be greene, they stande in slippery places, the Lorde will cast them downe into desolation, they shalbe suddenly destroyed, perished, and horribly consumed: how many instances and examples can I giue you of this matter? but to leaue all,

1.Pet.4. 17. 18.

Psal.37.20.

Psal.73.18.

and

and to remember one, who can sufficiently expresse, or thoroughly describe all the glorie, magnificence, pompe, pleasure, prosperitie and wealth of Nebuchadnezar the king of Babel, who had power ouer all kingdomes, and all nations serued him, and did put their neckes vnder his yoke and by reason of his conquest ouer Ierusalem, and ouer Iehoiakim the king of Iuda, and ouer the house of the Lorde, his golde and siluer, and treasure was mightily increased, and yet for all this, as high as his estate was, and as infinite as his wealth was, you know what iustice happened vnto him: he was cut downe by the watchman, his kingdome was taken from him, and hee from it, and hee became both poore amongst men, and miserable among beastes. This the Lorde our God to whom no mã is like is able to do, he maketh poore, and maketh riche, as Hanna the mother of Samuel sometime did sing, hee exalteth, and bringeth lowe, it is as easie a matter with him to make a man a caytiffe, as a king, and a peysant as a Prince, for health, and sicknesse, life and death, prosperitie and beggery they are in his handes, to giue the one for a blessing, and to inflict the other for a punishment, when, where, and how it plea-

Iere. 2. 6. 7.

2. King. 2. 24.

Dan. 4. 30.

1. Sam. 2. 7.

seth him. How many men are there euen a-
mong vs, within ye cõpasse of our own know-
ledge, who somtimes florished in ye world, & bra-
ued it out in ye best sort, & who but they? wã-
ting nothing that might serue for the ful-
filling of their desires and the glorie of their
pleasures, swimming in silkes, abounding
with wealth, houses, grounds, sheepe, oxen, &
many other things, yet nowe they are stript
into their dublets, and turned as it were to
their bag & staff, not so ful before as now they
are miserable and emptie: this is the vncer-
teinty of humane happines. who therfore but
a foolish or rather mad man, will trust this
world, & put any cõfidence in his wealth, and
proceed to ware proud thereof, as though it
shold for euer cõtinue with him, nay, suppose
it do stãd w̃ a man a long time, yet although
his riches leaue not him, yet he in ye end shall
leaue his riches, & be he as rich as Crœsus,
or as Diues was, yet at the last he shal iump
with Lazarus, and be as poore as hee. And
therfore it is not in vaine that Paul in his in-
structiõs to Timothie, doth of purpose touch
this particular point of the vncerteinety of
1.Tim.6.17. carnall wealth. Charge them ye are riche in
this world (saith he) that they bee not high
minded, & that they trust not in vncertain ri-

ches but in the liuing God, &c. Obserue the attribute: he doth not say, that they trust not in wicked riches, deceitful riches, or such like words, but in vncertayne riches, which epithete, he doth their vse, as a speciall argument to dissuade men from the reposing of any trust in the same: for it is a great foolishnes to trust to an vncertayne thing: who will leane to a broken staffe in leaping ouer a ditch? what mariner wil hazard his ship vō a rottē cable? what mā wil build a tower vpon a weak foūdation? & what distressed perso wil in extremitie relie vpon a sicle freinde? now if it be a cōsequence of want of wit in a man to do any of these things, is it not ȳ like also in him ȳ shal plāt his affiance in riches, being a thing in confessiō, as brittle as a broken staffe, as weak as a rottē cable, as tottering as a sandie foundation, as vnconstant as a wauering friend, as mutable as the winde, and as meltable as the snow? let the riche man therefore vpon remembrance of this point if he be carefull of his owne good, cast of his immoderate desire of wealth, and vnchristian opinion of the strength thereof, & content himself vō lawful means in the vse of his trade, & if God doth blesse his labors as he hath promised to the righteous man, let

him conuert his sufficiencie to the inlargement of the kingdome of God, his glorie, the furtherance of his worde, the comfort of the Saintes, and the profite of the Churche of God euery way, not yeelding to the affections of a foolish heart which will carrie a mã to ostentation, pride, and prodigalitie, and other vanities, but in all his actions seeking the honour of him, from whome he receiued his blessings: let him carefully consider the vncerteintie for continuance in that he possesseth, and thereupon while hee hath his riches, before the euill dayes doe come, dispose of it according to knowledge and conscience, least when the yeres of dearth, and necessitie doe approche, then he say as a commõ Gamester, and Diceplayer vsually doth, who hauing lost his mony at one vnthriftie, will then sweare, and take on, and professe, I would I had rather giuen it to the poore, saying so when his money being gone is become another mans, but when hee had it as his owne, he had no such good minde to do it. I my selfe haue hearde many, who sometime were in good case, and state, but nowe are in the contrary, wishing that when their abilitie was good, they had done this, and that, to the poore, to the Church of God, to

the

the Preacher, and to other good vses, but when they were in their prosperitie they had no such good motion, nor gracious feeling in them. There is no doubt, but that Diues when he once felt the torment, & knewe the cause therof, he repented ten thousand times, that hee had not releeued Lazarus in his life: but then his repentaunce was too late, and had I wist, is alwayes the naturall and essentiall propertie of a foole. For a wise man will prouide a remedie for a mischiefe while time serues, but a foole when it is too late. Remember therefore the Parable of the talentes, and therein the iudgement of that euill and slothful seruant, Mat. 25.26.
who not imploying his one talent to the aduantage of his maister, had the same taken from him, & giuen to his diligent fellowe, & himselfe in the ende, as an vnprofitable hireling, thrown into vtter darknes. And surely in this respect, that place of Salomon in his preacher is most excellēt, who speaking of ý miserable mind of the couetous man, not hauing the grace to vse his riches as he should do, he doth affirme that he had seene an euill Eccle.6.1.2.
vnder the sun, which was much amōgst the sonnes of men, namely, a mā to whom God hath giuē riches, & treasures, & honor, & hee

wanteth nothing for his soule of all that it desireth, but God giueth him not power to eate thereof. Which indeede is a plague of plagues, that a man should haue in his fingers & custodie, that, by the good vse wherof hee might doe singular good in Gods Church, to his glorie, and the saluation of many soules, & yet doth abuse his blessinges to the maintenance of his pride, bellicheere, wantonnes, luxuriousnes, couetousnes, vsurie, and other sinnes, without any regarde of that duetie whereunto the woorde of God doth binde, and direct him. If this thing be well marked, and aduisedly considered of
Luk. 1′. 8. 9 our riche men: I doubt not but that by the helpe of God, the same good & prudent effect which wrought in the vnrighteous steward, vpon the reckoning which his master called for at his hands, wil followe in them, namely a wise, and prouident dealing while they are in office, & a purchasing of friends by the riches of iniquitie, that when themselues do want, they may be receiued into euerlasting habitations: but now, if we take these words in ye other sense, namely ye the rich man is not to be proud of his wealth, not to boast therof, nor to be blowē vp in any arrogāt cōceit of himself therupō, but rather to ioyn humility

with

with ye same, to be lowly in his own eies, & to bee so much the more lowly, by how much ye greater his substãce is, as ye constructiõ may be & is good, so is ye doctrine profitable, for it teacheth ye rich mã, with what vertue amõgst the rest, his state must be accõpanied & adorned, & with what tẽperature, he is to mixe ye sweetnes of his abũdance, & ye eminẽcy of his degree, to be ful, & yet to be as if he were empty, rich, & yet as if he were poore, high in coũtenance, and yet as if he were low in calling, to be of the same minde whereof the holy Apostle was, as he reportes of himself, saying, Philip. 4. 12. 13.
I haue learned in whatsoeuer state I am therwith to be content. I can be abased, and I cã abound euery where in al things, I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungrie, and to abound, and to haue want, I am able to do al thinges through the helpe of Christ which strengtheneth me, as if hee had sayde in other wordes, when I am on the one side pinched with pouerty, loaden with contẽpts oppressed wõ miseries, or howsoeuer afflicted & persecuted, I am content I dispaire not, I submit my selfe, & refer my case to the will, & pleasure of God, and I doe with patience in mind, & constancy in behauiour endure, & vndergoe the burden of my crosses. And on the other side also, when I am out of the perill

of all mishappes, when my foote hath escaped the fowlers net, and my soule the Persecutors swoyde, so that my life & libertie is in no hazard, or distresse, & I feele the want of no good thing, then I am not high minded, I waxe not proude, I exalt not my selfe arrogantly, & presumptuously, but with a sober minde, in the feare of God I take and vse the benefit of his good blessings, the euidẽces of his loue returning vnto him ẏ duties of praise, & thanks for all things. This is a singular dispositiõ of spirit, & a mirror of mortificatiõ & wisdom, or rather ẏ chief skil & arte of the childrẽ of God to cary thẽselues so vprightly, directly, & equally in al occurrẽts, as neither by ẏ storms of afflictiõs to be brokẽ & ouerthrowen, nor yet by the sweete draught of prosperous euentes to bee made drunke, neither to bee dismayed with the sharpnes of the Lords discipline, and trials, nor yet to surfet with the pleasure of his fauours, but so to liue and stand in both cases, as if they were one: & howsoeuer the worlde goeth, or their condition altereth, to bee the same maner of mẽ, of the same mind, behauiour, gouernment, & quality stil. Which good and constant example in Paul, if it were of vs imitated and expressed, I should thinke that the ouerflowing riche man woulde

not

not so much forget himselfe in the time of his felicitie as he doth, liuing in pompe, and securitie without all feare of God, and holy exercises: and that the needy poore man also, would not so often acquaint himselfe, with vnlawfull actions, practised for his violent relefe, whereby many times the peace of the countrey is hazarded, and broken, but rather content himselfe with his meane fortune, and liue within compasse of lawe and honesty, relying vpō the good prouidence of God, which beeing continually working for sparrowes, will not fayle him if hee faithfully trust in his mercie. But ye se what the drift of my speech is by occasion of the present words, that the riche man if he will reioyce, and be proud of any thing it must be of humilitie, and not of any vaine confidence in himselfe, or his wealth, to auoyde the vaine-glorious humor of ý Pharasie, whose welth bred pride in his hearte, and the pride of his hearte ministred contempt to his lippes, in despising, and disdeyning his neighbour the Publican. Which thing is many times a fruite, & consequence of abundance without speciall moderation, and gouernement. For the Apostle affirmeth that the bounteousnesse of God leading a man to repentance is

Luke 18.11.

not

not so taken of him but rather conuerted to an abuse of the Lordes patience, and sufferance, to the hardening of hearte, and heaping vppe of a treasure of wrath for himselfe against the day of wrath: and in the prophesie of Ieremie the Lorde himselfe makes complaint that whereas by the great measure of his blessings powred with both his hands vpon his people, he had prouoked them to obedience, they cōtrariwise followed the swap of their lusts, and being fed full assembled themselues by companies in the harlots houses: they rose vp in the morning like fed horses, for euery man neyghed after his neighbours wife. The experience of this woful matter we see in these daies plain lie as in a diamond, wherein the good blessings of God which should stirre vs vppe to Christian thankefulnes, are shamefully prophaned, and turned quite as it were against the heare, to an engendring, and fostering of sinne, and abhomination. As wee are equall with Sodom & Ierusalem in fulnes of bread, so in iniquities, pride, abundance of idlenes, & neglect to strengthē the hand of the poore and needie. May Sodom, and Ierusalem, and adde to thē a third, Samaria, these neuer cōmitted halfe of our sinnes, but we haue exceeded

Rom 2.4.5.

Ierem.5.7.8

Ezek.16.49.

creeded the number of their transgressions, & haue iustified all their workes. And did the Lord in his displeasure make thē carry their own shame, and confounded them, & will he passe by vs, & our houses, & not suffer the destroyer to come in? hath he plauged his owne citie wherein his name was called vpon, and shall we goe free? hath he not spared the natrall branch, and shall we that are graftes escape the are, and iudgment? is it not good reason, and equitie, that if we commit their sins, we should also feele their scourges? for God is not parciall in his iustice, neither can any fauour or regard peruert ý course of his righteousnesse, but as sure as he liueth we shal know the price of our sins, & feele the ful smart of his wrath as they haue done, except we proclayme our fast, and put on our sackcloth, and sit in ashes, crying mightelie to the Lord for mercie, and euery man turne from his euil wayes, & from the wickednes of his hāds, then the Lord wil repent him of ý euil ý he hath purposed against vs, & not do it, & ý which he hath said he would do, he wil not do it, otherwise ý abuse of his blessings being cōtinued, & ý multitude of our other sins increased, shal procure ý suddē desolatiō, which shal neuer be recouered, & ý horrible destruction, which shall cause our names to be abhorred

Ib. ver. 54.

Rom. 11. 21.

Ionah. 3. 5. & 10.

of

of the generations to come. Well it remayneth now onely to stand vpō the ý third & last part of our diuision, contayning by amplification a reason of the former speech of the Apostle, wherfore the rich man is not to trust to his welth, nor to depēd vpon the strēgth of his riches, the reason is, because the same as Salomō speaks, is as an Eagle which suddēly takes her wings, & flyeth into ý heauē. It is a flying thing, a thing subiect to corruptiō & chāg: no surer then ý flower of the grasse, which alwayes perisheth, and vanisheth away. There are in scripture many swift thinges to the vncertayne qualities whereof the nature of wealth and riches is likened, and resembled: as sometimes to a shadow, which of it selfe in substance is nothing, but the bare glymse of the body being interposed betwixt the sun & the earth: sometimes to a post, and speedy messenger, who cōming in post departeth in hast, either in some seruice from the pyince, or in carrying newes to the court: sometimes to a ship which passeth thorow the waues of the water, the trace whereof being once gone cannot be found, nor the path thereof seene in the floods, sometimes to a byrde that flyeth in the ayre, and no man can see any token of her

Pro.23.5.

Wis.5.9.10. 11.12.

flight

flight: sometimes to an arrow which is shot at a marke which deuideth the ayre for a time, but it commeth together againe immediately, so that a man cannot know where it went thorowe, and sometimes to the dust which is blowen away by the winde, al these things naturally, and liuely expressing the hopelesse condition of riches, and the trustlesse prosperitie of this life. But amongst al other fit, and proper things to this purpose, the same comparisō which the Apostle vseth in this place, is not the least nor the last in conueniencie, and aptnes, making an equalitie betwixt the riche man, & a flower of the grasse, which although for a time it be very glorious, and beautifull, yet all the glory thereof is weake, and all the beautie thereof vaine, and subiect to a sudden chaunge. And as in this place riches, so in other places such things, as are in their prime, and gallantnesse are compared with this flower, and amongst the rest the time of youth, and yonge yeares, is tearmed by the name of the flower of a mans age, because then the body is lusty, the limmes strong, the proportion comely, the blood stirring, the wittes fresh, the memorie quicke, all the powers perfect, and nothing in nature wanting for inwarde and out-

outward sufficiencie. But most commonly in scripture, such things as be short in continuance, and in state transitorie, are resembled to this flower, as in the booke of Iob, that holy, and patient man, entring into a description of the miserable state and course of mans life from his byrth day, to his dying day, affirmeth that man being borne shoteth forth as a flower, and is cut downe, he vanisheth also as a shadowe, and continueth not. Quickly come, and quickly gone: soone ripe, & soone rotten as the prouerbe is. The crying voyce in the prophet Esay, doth make a difference betwixt ý state of a grasse, and of a flower, the one being of longer continuance, though all be but little then the other. All flesh is grasse, but the grace of flesh, that is the beautie excellencie, wisdome, and power of flesh is as the flower of the field, the flower is more orient, and elegant, then the grasse, but the grasse is more durable, and permanent then the flower: both are subiecte to decay, and corruption, but yet the one droppeth to the earth sooner then the other. Which thing is to be applied to the wordes of our text, and to be regarded of the riche man with some speciall diligence, for as much as himselfe is heare by the Apo-

Iob. 14. 2.

Esay 40. 6. 7

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He resembled, not to the grasse but to the flower therof, which of the two makes most speede to consumption. The holy Ghost by the prophet Dauid, doth of purpose describe a flower, or grasse, shewing what it is, and of what force, and time for continuance. For hauing spoken in the former circumstances of the Psalme, of the fragillitie and weakenesse, of the breuitie, and shortnesse of mans life, prooving it to be of no longer perpetuitie, then a day, a floode, a watche, a sleepe, a thought, and last of all a grasse, hee doth thereupon inlarge that last similitude, by expressing the state of the same grasse, in the morning (sayth hee) it florisheth, and groweth, but in the euening it is cut downe, and withered. Which is all one with that further description, which Iames makes heere in the next verse of this chapter, where amplyfying this reason which wee haue now in hande, hee sheweth the maner of the decay of the riche man, by the degrees of corruption, wherunto the grasse is subiect. For as when the sunne ariseth with heate, then the grasse withereth, and the flower falleth away, and the goodlye shape of it perisheth, euen so shall the rich man wither away

Psal. 90. 6.

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in all his wayes: In which words he toucheth ye generall course of increase, & decrease in al vegetatiue & growing things, which as they haue their beginning, so they haue also their declination, and ende, and cannot alwayes continue in one state: so in riches there is a beginning, and that sometimes base and simple, and as small as the beginning of a roote of a grasse, or of the seede of a flower which is not great in the greatest. We see and knowe amongst our selues, many who now are rich and welthy, and in sufficiencie farre beyond many of their neighbours, who began the world but with a smal stock, with little or nothing, yet by the blessing of God, & their own diligẽce, their stock is increased, their state bettered, and their roome and place nowe reuerend amongst vs. Which beginning & originall of theirs, I could wish many to reuoke, and call backe to memorie, who are now so farre gone with pride, and arrogance, by reason of their present prosperitie, that they forgette the place from whence they came, the parentes from whom they discended, the simple seede from whence the great measure of their wealth hath spong, and their owne vnworthinesse every way without Gods mercie to receiue

any

any such blessinge. Which thing being remẽbred, and aduisedly considered, I doube not, will worke that good effect, which is nowe wanting in those, whom their fulnesse hath made drunke, and obliuious of their owne progenie, and the graces, and fauours of God towardes them extended: namely thankefulnesse to God for the same, care of his honour, respecte of his true seruice, humilitie, lowlinesse of minde, and tendernesse of hearte towards those, who feele nowe the sharpenesse of that want, and necessitie, whereunto themselues in the remẽbrance of many were sometimes subiecte. But by reason of the common neglecte of Christian dueties in this case, we see howe in iustice the Lorde doth deale with such maner of men who floting vp for a time, as the sea or flood when it aryseth, yet at the last are brought downe to a low ebbe, and iump in cõclusion with that barẽ figgetree, which receiued a curse from the mouth of him who neuer blesseth vnrighteouse branches, and by and by for all his gloriouse leaues witherede, and came to nothing, or with that same gourde, which came vp as a shadow to the head of Ionas for a time, but Mat. 21. 19.

Ionah.4.7. 10.

beeing smitten by a worme presently dryed vppe, so that as it sprange in a night, so it perished in a night. Examples of our time in this case are superfluous: for the matter is most euident, and the men are yet liuing, whose states are spectacles of this iustice, and whose decay are glasses of this declination, their tree of wealth hauing knowen the force of a curse, and their gourde of pleasures hauing felt the worme of vengeance, so that as their riches already hath, so themselues hourly doe, according to the wordes of Iames, in this place, vanish awaye as a flower of the grasse. Which thing being true I doe not a little marueil, that there are so many in the worlde, who contrary to their owne knowledge (for in this matter they cannot pleade ignorance) doe make their wealth their supporte, and their treasure their shooteanker, not onely being proude thereof, but that which is an argument of a miraculous vnsensiblenesse, doe plant their confidence in the same, looking for helpe and deliuerance from their rustie and corrupte gatherings, which shall consume as a snayle that meleth, and as the vntimely

lye fruite of a woman, that hath not seene the sunne. It was a speciall thinge giuen in charge by Paul to Timothie that hee should inioyne riche men in no case to trust in their riches: for hee knewe sufficiently howe to a riche man a perswasion intending to trust and repose in his wealth, is most plausible, euen as wee see it apparant in these dayes, by the actions of those men, whom God hath blessed with great abundance, who presuming vppon the same, and thinking themselues able thereby to compasse any matter, doe applie themselues to oppression and tyranny, by excoriating or skinning the poore man, chalenging those landes, and possessions wherein they haue no interest, but make a claime, and pretenced right, of purpose to defraud, and vndoe those, whome they knowe by reason of their wantes not able to make their parte good, by continuing the charges of lawe against them. And many other vile thinges of like nature, are commonly put in practise by them, not mistrusting the successe of any matter they take in hande, intending, that if briberie, and corruption, and rewardes, may pur- 1.Tim.6.17.

chase particularly, and peruert the righteouse course of iustice they will assuredly speed of their purpose: this is the reason that so many bad and odious sutes are nowe vndertaken and prosecuted, ouerthrowing the foundations, and states of many good men, because the opinion which the vnrighteous man hath of victorie, and preuaylement by his wealth, is a spurre in him to tyranny, supposing that his golde shal beare him out, and the countenance of his money shall terrifie as many as resist him. This oppressour doth little thinke of the wordes of Iames in this place, proclayming the naturall vncertaynetie of the riche man, and his Mammon, or of the mightie foolishnes of his heart, or of ꝑ iudgment of God entring into his doores, from whose handes his money shall not saue him, nor his coyne keepe him in the daye of his wrath. Howe necessary then for the time is this doctrine, and that counsell of the holy prophet. Trust not in oppression and robbery, if riches increase set not your harte thereon, and that notable confession of Iob also for example and direction, whose life is a president for vs, who sometimes in

Ezek.7.19.

Psal.62.10.

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in great vehemencie wished, that his arme might fall from his shoulder, and be broken from the bone, if he had euer made gold his hope, or had sayde to the wedge of gold thou art my confidence, or reioyced in that his substance was great, and that his hand had gotten muche. A confession which thousandes of our dayes cannot make with any trueth, whose whole trust standeth in the heape of their treasure, and whole glorie in the possessiõ of their wealth, hauing the like vayne, and vaineglorious conceite which Haman in the Booke of Hester, who instead of acknowledging ỳ goodnesse of God towards him called his friends together, and in the pride of his heart tolde them all the glorie of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, &c.

Iob.3.24.25.

Hester.5.11.

But against such maner of men the Lorde by the Prophet Amos doeth threaten, to raise vp an afflicting nation, from the entring in of Hamah, vnto the wildernes that is a generall destruction without the escape of anie, because they reioyce in a thing of nought, and saie haue not wee gotten vs horne by our owne strength? howe muche

Amos 6.14. 13.

better then were it for vs, and all men to cast of this peeuish confidence in the arme of flesh and in the vanishing shadowe of carnall things, and to trust in him, and his mercie, who is the shielde, and buckler of the faithfull, the God of all strength and saluation, and able sufficiently to saue those, that relye vppon his goodnes: howe much more profitable for our selues, and for our soules comfortable were it to put in vse that sweet direction of our Sauiour, lay not vp treasures for your selues vpon earth, where the mothe, and canker doth corrupt, and where theeues doe digge through, and steale, but laye vp treasure for your selues in Heauen, where neyther the mothe nor canker corrupteth, and where no theeues can digge thorowe to steale. Which wordes if they were well considered, and diligently examined, woulde appeare to carrie within the compasse or bowels of them many good reasons to dissuade vs from all miserable indeuours of scraping together the pelfe of the worlde, and all idolatrous confidences in the same. I will not stande to discourse at large of those three seuerall enemyes to whose power the nature of all carnall treasure

Mat. 6. 19. 20.

sure is subiect, and must obey, forasmuche as there is nothing which a man externally can possesse, but that in time, either the mothe may frette it, or the canker may corrupt it, or the theefe may violently breake in and surprise it, whereby first the corruption, then the consumption, and last the danger, and small securitie of wealth is most fully and excellently shewed, and withall the huge vanitye of mens heartes condemned, who serue with deuotion, and honour, that transitorie trashe, wherein there is neither strength to continue, nor substaunce to indure, nor assurance to stande without decay and losse: but this one thing in the woordes maie bee with breuitie obserued, that our Sauiour doeth there remember vs of the place wherein we liue, and vseth the same as a reason to withdraw our myndes, from the heaping vp of treasure in the same. This earth is not our habitation, but thorowfare: wee are not heere as dwellers for euer, but as soiourners for a time, as all our fathers were, wee haue heere no rest, Micha.2.10
nor continuing Citie, but wee must seeke Heb.13.14.
one to come, wee must haue wiues as if wee had none, wee must weepe as though

wee wept not, and reioyce as though wee reioyced not, and buye as though wee possessed not, and vse this worlde as though wee vsed it not for the fashion of this world goeth awaye: and therefore if there were any measure of ordinary witte and wisedome in vs, wee woulde not so greedily apply our selues to couetousnesse, nor so carnally dispose of our selues to the loue of the worlde, and worldly thinges as wee doe, beeyng by our owne knowledge so naturally subiect to a short durance, and so constãtly ordayned to an vniuersal destruction, but rather wee woulde respect that place, which is immortall, and that treasure which is incorruptible, and laye vp for our selues in store (as the spirite speaketh) a good foundation agaynst the time to come, that wee maye obtayne eternall life. Doe wee not knowe that the Heauens shall passe awaye with a noyse, and that the elementes shall melt with heate, and that the earth with the woorkes that are therein shall bee burnt vp? And if wee doe knowe it, is it not expedient for vs, that wee looke ouer, and beyonde all these thinges, and by a holy conuersation, and faithfull hope, expect

1.Cor.7. 29.30.

1.Tim.6.19.

2.Pet.3.10. 13.

pect newe Heauens, and a newe earth, wherein dwelleth righteousnesse: Is it not requisite for vs to bee risen with Christ, and to seeke those thinges which are aboue, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of GOD, that when hee shall appeare, Colos.3.1.4. and come in iudgement with thousandes of Angels, wee maye also appeare with him in glorie: My beloued brethren, and sisters in the Lorde, suffer the woordes of exhortation: if there bee any consolation in Christ, if anye comfort of loue, if anie fellowshippe of the spirite, if any compassion of mercie, looke to your selues, and regarde the state of your soules: let not the precious death of Christ Iesus bee made without effect in you, grieue not the holy spirite of GOD by which you houlde bee sealed agaynst the day of redemption. Philip.2. Ep.1.4.30. set your affections vpon heauenly thinges, and not vppon the thinges of corruption. Let your conuersation bee without couetousnesse, to doe good, and to distribute Heb.13.16. forgette not, for with such sacrifices God is pleased, if all these thinges be amongest you and abounde in you, you cannot possibly bee vnfruitefull in the acknowledging

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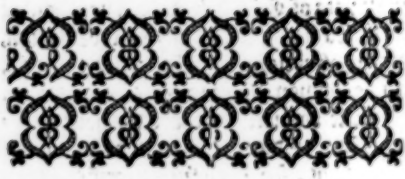
of Christ. Nowe the God of peace, that brought agayne from the dead our Lorde Iesus, the greate shepheardc of the sheepe, through the blood of the euerlasting couenant, make you perfect in all good workes, to doe his wil, working in you that which is pleasant in his sight through Iesus Christ, to whom be praise for euer, and euer. Amen.

Heb. 13. 20. 21.

FINIS.



The errors and misprinting of wordes *escaped in the presse, are here amended,* which otherwise might marre the sense, *and hinder the Reader.*

Leafe:	*Page:*	*Line:*	*Error:*	*Correction.*
3	2	25	rithes	riches.
6	2	18	corrupion	corruption.
8	1	22	gteater	greater.
14	1	1	exceeded	exceede.
15	2	22	these	those.
24	1	2	in in	in
25	2	11	beefore	beeing.
27	2	23	approueth	appeareth.
29	2	26	which	with.
31	1	27	wee	were
32	1	1	externall	eternall.
35	2	11	his	this.
40	2	13	riches ches	riches.
41	1	1	for	so.
42	2	15	hee	the
44	2	24	forte	sorte.
50	2	16	saide	saie.
54	2	10	flying	flitting.
56	2	27	sponge	sprang.
57	1	22	bare	barren.
Ib.	1	27	ground	gourde.
59	1	10	hope	heape.

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